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THE DEADLY
HANDS OF
KUNG FU
MAR. № 22
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THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU

TM

**ALL NEW!
THE WHITE
TIGER
AT BAY!**

**THE MOST DARING
MARTIAL ARTS
HERO OF
THEM ALL!**



MARVEL



STAN LEE presents

THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU

Vol. 1 / No. 22

March 1976

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IRON FIST: THE LIVING WEAPON TO STORM THE WALLS OF HELL!

By Chris Claremont & Rudy Nebres

Time grows short and Iron Fist may lose the Firebird's soul — sounding the grim deathknell for the entire human race!

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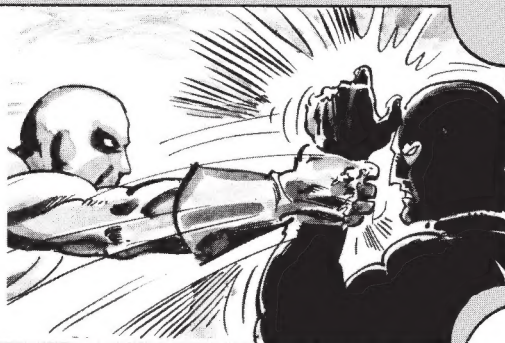
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SONS OF THE TIGER: WHO IS THE WHITE TIGER?

By Bill Mantlo, Keith Giffen, & Rico Rival

Abe Brown finds himself at the helm of a 747 carrying a cargo of death. And the White Tiger faces his most bizarre challenger yet!

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Dear Armadillos,

Hey, guess what? You finally put out an issue of DEADLY HANDS that moves me to want to comment! Past issues have been, to say the least, uneven in quality, usually held back by the moronic and pointless violence of Sons of the Tiger, or an atrocious cover or some dim-bulb inarticulate synopsis of a trashy flick, but this time the issue was almost perfect, lacking only, say, a McGregor piece.

After Moench's seemingly endless and generally directionless Asianized "Maltese Falcon," the Iron Fist story by Claremont looks line a refreshing change. It has a sense of movement to it that Doug's increasingly introspective Shang-Chi sorely needed. This is not to say the story was without fault. The first complaint is the formulized "You are Iron Fist" opening. Addressing the character has always seemed more than slightly stupid to me as a literary device because it doesn't make the reader feel like the character, it just makes him feel like he's *supposed* to feel like the character, which almost inevitably creates a barrier to real participation in the story, or at least it does to me. I suggest the device be abandoned.

Now for the real complaint, Chris. Iron Fist is supposed to be a (if not *the*) supreme master of martial arts, no? Good enough to beat Lei Kung the Thunderer, Shou-Lao the Undying, the Ninja-spirit, etc., right? Do you realize how it looks to have an article in the same issue blithely reporting Ling Chi catching bullets with his bare hand while this supposedly larger-than-life hero is so poorly trained that a dumb flatfoot can walk up and beat him over the head with a nightstick, so incapable of paying attention to a fight-to-the-death that he needs a warning from Jade to know Ma-Mien is within grabbing distance? You have to make up your mind, Chris: either Iron Fist is a superhero who uses the martial arts, or else he isn't, and attempting to mix real-world limits to his abilities with superhuman power only diminishes the possible impact of either course. Still, I did like the story and am looking forward to the next chapter.

As for the art, Nebres appears to have taken a large step forward from the just-concluded Shang-Chi story wherein he frequently ran amok on the page. This time out there's more control evident, a much more coherent structure to each page, although his greatest problem remains a definite lack of differentiation, by which I mean that it's damn hard to tell which leg belongs to which torso, or where the character stops and the background starts. Also, his faces are approximately interchangeable, within gender limits, and none, including Prof. Wing, look

like they've completed puberty.

Every once in a while someone I've ignored or never really liked will suddenly surprise me with a first-class piece of work. Such is the case with Bill Mantlo. His previous Sons of the Tiger had turned me off completely and his other work bored me. That prison story was so bad I almost tore the book up. But suddenly "An Ending" has changed my outlook on Bill's future work from "Who cares?" to "Can he top it?" There was genuine sensitivity in that script; the violence for once made sense, the characterizations finally seemed to jell. My highest compliment is that now I think Mantlo could someday develop into a Gerber or McGregor or Englehart, whereas before I had written him off as the next Conway.

John Leavitt
19 Maple Avenue
Newton, N.H. 03858

Strangely enough, we haven't really had that much comment either way concerning the second-person narrative technique employed in the Iron Fist series since its inception. However, Cheerful Chris Claremont himself confesses to feeling just a mite uncomfortable with it, or at least certain aspects of it (such as the "You are Iron Fist..." subjective opening you cited). We suggest you keep your eye on the series, both here and in his color book, over the next couple of months. Chris will be maintaining the second-person style, but it will become much looser, less heavy handed. Let us know what you think!

And as for your other point, John, it's not as if Ling Chi was *blithely* catching bullets in real life; after all, he nearly got his arm torn off, didn't he? Which seems to go far toward illustrating the principle which Chris was attempting to incorporate into his Iron Fist story—the fallibility of even a master of kung fu, given appropriate circumstances. We are, all of us, human beings first and martial arts masters or scintillating scripters second.

Finally, Boisterous Bill seems to have the capacity to continually provoke controversy in one quarter or another, particularly with his Sons of the Tiger stories. The fact that he also has the ability to evoke outspoken praise indicates that the man is onto something—and as you point out, someone to watch.

Dear Archie and John,

DEADLY HANDS is such a fine magazine, especially recently, that it's a shame Marvel saw fit to cancel most

of the black-and-white line. I really feel I'm getting my dollar's worth, and that's hard to be saying about anything today.

That was a beautiful Bob Larkin "Iron Fist" cover, far superior to Nick Cardy's catastrophe last issue. And, of course, Jim Starlin's portrayal of his own creation—Shang-Chi—on the inside cover didn't strain the eyes either. I must applaud Archie Goodwin's timely editorial, dealing with the very serious matter of the aerosol spray menace. I'm happy to see somebody taking the initiative and attempting to alert the general public to the awesome danger we may face. I guarantee there will be as many letters commenting on that editorial as there will be on any other section of the book, and it's no wonder. Isn't it ironic that, as Marvel comics fans, we're accustomed to reading about the incredible super-weapons created by all those dastardly villains out to destroy the world, and Marvel's writers are continually wracking their brains to outdo each other in the "end of the world" department, while with the flick of a finger, each of us may be bringing about the Earth's demise just as surely as Fu Manchu ever could! If ever there was a subject which fit more neatly into a magazine devoted to martial arts than the lethal aerosol can, I can't think of it. It makes me feel a wee bit better, knowing that several hundred thousand other people have been given facts on this potential threat.

Chris Claremont started off his "Iron Fist" serial with an intriguing plotline that promises to be most exciting, given the six-month duration of the strip. It was nice to see Danny Rand going to Professor Wing's home with Jade, his new companion, rather than seeing the character wrenched from his color-comic environment without any explanation. Rudy Nebres' art was fine, but I must complain about his fight scenes. Rudy makes them rather difficult to follow due to the overlap of figures, arms, legs, etc., and so it's tough to tell who's been hit and who's doing the hitting. In the future I would like to see him tone his action scenes down a bit with some panel continuity, and not have them wandering all over the page. Aside from this, Rudy is doing some fine work.

Before reading Dan Hagen's article, "Dragon of the Mind," I had never heard of Mr. Ling Chi or his spectacular martial artistry. Normally, most of what Mr. Chi does in his demonstrations would be considered sheer showmanship; but considering his motivation in performing as he does, I suppose it can be accepted in another light. This was a nice article, and shows you people are on the ball in trying to supply the readers with some of the more offbeat things happening in the world of martial arts.

One of the real high points of the issue was that near treatise on "Karate: A History of the Empty Hand," by Steve Clement. Perhaps the technical, comprehensive nature of the feature might have turned some of the more casual readers off; yet anybody with more than a nominal interest in this deadly art couldn't help but benefit intellectually from this little handbook. Please, more of this kind of feature in the future, detailing the backgrounds and present conditions of any of the myriad unarmed combat styles. Nice job.

When I first heard that Count Dante *did* exist, and that it was really him peering menacingly at the comic-book buying public from the pages of his advertisement, I wondered just how proficient this gentleman really was. Apparently there's little reason to wonder any longer, after scanning "World's Deadliest Fighting Secrets *Not* Revealed" by Val Eads. Val is to be complimented for the objective treatments she gave the "Black Dragons," though it must have been a temptation to really turn this article into a berating diatribe, considering the lack of skill shown by Count Dante's crew. One wonders what would have ensued had the legendary Count, himself, seen fit to dazzle the audience with his mythical death touch. Kidding aside, perhaps he was a good martial artist after all, though his controversial teaching techniques cast doubt on his expertise as an instructor. Considering the final two paragraphs in italics, we'll never really know.

With the writing of "An Ending," featuring the Sons of the Tiger, Bill Mantlo has outdone himself on this series, bringing into blinding focus those forces which hold the Sons together, and those capable of rendering them asunder as a group entity. One of the most interesting

things about the story was the innocuous, almost comical opening, starring Bill and George themselves, which gave one the illusion all is well in Lower Manhattan. But the boom was lowered on page 50, and it was a hard-hitting piece of drama the rest of the way through.

I was impressed with the running dialogue which was kept up between Bob Diamond and Lin Sun during their extended battle. Although in the strictest sense of realism, such chatter would have been impossible given the explosive circumstances, the dramatic license taken by Bill was necessary to prevent the fight from remaining on a strictly physical level. This is the first opportunity we've had to glance at the distant backgrounds of any of the Sons through their eyes, and this certainly solidifies their positions as living, breathing individuals, motivated by diverse demons. It was a powerful piece of writing that gripped the reader without let-up. And George Perez's artwork fit as beautifully with Bill's scripting as fingers in a glove.

For the future, there are a couple of personalities who have made their mark in the fighting world, who the readers might enjoy reading about. One is Marion Bermudez, who is a young woman who has competed in karate against men, and beaten them, as well as in the Golden Gloves. She's young, and quite the tigress from what I've read about her. She is definitely a leader in women's karate today, so she might be a fit subject for any interview. The other person is Master Alan Lee, a kung fu expert who claims to have mastered, to some extent, the more deadly kung fu weapons, such as the poison palm and the iron fist technique. He's well known and respected, and I'm sure an interview with him would prove very interesting.

I really have no complaints with DEADLY HANDS, for the current management seems to have done quite nicely so far. I wish you the best of luck with this book, and the rest of the black-and-white line.

Ralph Macchio
188 Wilson Drive
Cresskill, N.J. 07626

Hey, Ralph, yours is the kind of perceptive in-depth letter that sends the editorial office (Archie and John, and whoever else happens to be hanging around at the time) into paroxysms of delight. Not to mention the respective contributors whose work you discuss. Why, you even managed to soothe Artful Archie's editorial scruples about that self-indulgent but nonetheless serious rap he laid down on spray cans. The more we think about it, the more we realize what an inclusive job you did: there's not even a whole lot for us to comment on, other than to say that we'll see what we can do about picking up on your suggestions for potential subjects for future article/interviews.

Keep kickin' those critiques our way, Ralph!

Dear People:

One of the many hazards of running a letter column is getting letters from people like me; but one assumes you knew the risks before you started the things, so here I am.

In #19, you featured 33 pages of story, and 22 pages of articles. I am not what one would call a martial arts enthusiast; to be frank, I bored to death by Dragon Stomps and Lightning Kicks. I only read the articles to give myself the impression of getting a dollar's worth of material.

I feel that three articles an issue are simply too much! Even worse, things are beginning to fall into ruts. This issue alone you managed to run both a "martial-arts-master-who-opens-school-and-catches-bullets-for-a-hobby-talks-about-his-philosophy" article and "a-short-and-informative-piece-on-the-history-of-the-martial-arts-haaiii!" To even further insult us you dare throw in a four page putdown of a laughable racket. Oh well, at least that one was original. Face it, thirty-six articles a year on the martial arts is going to make you start repeating yourself.

Ahem! My modest suggestion. Cut it down to twenty-four articles a year, and throw in reviews of more movies and books—even if they all do have the same plot.

I enjoyed the Warner and Sanho Kim collaboration on the "Corpse Rider," and think it would (a) call for a series

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on the lead characters in the story, or (b) call for more one-shot stories featuring samurai or ninjas in general. Either that, or you could give Fu Manchu a home at last.

However, it may be that you feel happy with the balance of art/story and articles, as it is, and I have bombarded your poor ears with suggestions that you find yourself in disagreement with.

Peace.

D.B. Webb
RR1 Box 60A
Beuna Vista Road, TN 38318

It's not often that we get the opportunity to totally disagree with somebody, D.B.—but we feel constrained to do so now. First, there's a matter of semantics involved in your description of our articles falling into "ruts." We hardly think that an attempt to establish a consistency and style of approach identifiable as our own deserves to be characterized so crudely. Your anti-article bias is indeed at work here.

Also, you appear to have made an assumption that deserves some clarification. The absence of any book or movie reviews in the particular issue under discussion doesn't mean we've abandoned them—not at all! In fact, as you may have noticed if you've skimmed to our Next Issue page, we have a special movie review section lined up for #23, analyzing current martial arts film trends, looking at such specific examples as: THE KILLER ELITE, THE MASTER GUNFIGHTER, and THE DRAGON FLIES. It's an in-depth section by our trio of toughminded critics, Warner, McGregor and Kraft.

So keep watchin', D.B., as we keep mixin' it up here at the Mighty Marvel magazine of martial arts —and keep an open mind, y'hear!

Dear Archie,

It seems Rudy Nebres was shafted by the printing last issue, so I owe him an apology for my overly harsh putdown of his art job. Though the first chapter of the Iron Fist epic was nothing really great, (Rudy's weaknesses were still much in evidence) it was better than I'd expected. Still confusing figures and indigestible blobs of black, though.

I didn't really care for the story. IF rescued a girl, met up with his old friends, and a Somewhat Sinister Society snuck in mysteriously and had a little fight, the whole thing culminating in some psychodelfics. Ho and hum. I was hoping for some nice adventure stuff, the kind that's being done on the color mags, not chapters with titles like "Soul-Slayer" and deep meanings with a few fights sprinkled along the way. The fortune-cookie philosophy works excellently when used sparingly and parallel to the storyline, but as a basis for the series? Maybe I'm overreacting to the fact that the art and format make this series look exactly like the Shang-Chi six-parter, which left me rather annoyed.

As for the rest of the issue, the cover was effective. Either Bob Larkin is getting better, or I'm getting used to him. Or maybe you're giving him cover themes that he works well with. Anyway, I liked the cover, as well as the new, toned-down logo; nice to see you're still moving in the direction of simplicity, after those horrendous early covers. The frontispiece could have been nice if Shang's head hadn't been so grossly disproportionate to his body; I'm surprised Jim could do a thing like this.

The SONS OF THE TIGER episode was the finest to see print yet, which might not be a great compliment, but what the heck. Both Bill and George are to be commended, as well as Jack. For once, they all meshed beautifully and effectively.

The opening sequence was just delightful, and I had as much fun reading it as Bill and George obviously did drawing and scripting it; I'm a sucker for this sort of fantasy/reality paradox, and though I felt it to be poured on maybe a bit thick at times, it worked as a light-hearted introduction to an otherwise grim story.

The plot was tremendously done. Doug Moench has previously delved into the hero-is-actually-a-stinker plot in PLANET OF THE APES, and it worked both for him and for Bill. Gerry Conway had a knack for creating mean

characters and passing them off as nice (not to mention warping most of those he got into his own hands), and Bill has done a brilliant job of knocking off the cool-playboy-straight-out-of-Enter-you-know-who image (pause for a moment while I recharge my hyphen-gun) to show the sickness beneath the polished image of Bob Diamond.

I was also very happy to see that Lin Sun shied away from that omnipresent fortune-cookie cliché that runs rampant these days from any scripter who has tuned in on KUNG FU. He got good and mad, and damned if he didn't throw the first blow when he got sick of Bobby's whining; oh, he did do some philosophizing, but it seems he's been wrong about keeping the group together at all costs. And I don't know if you ever noticed this, but an oriental character in comics is never wrong: he always seems to grasp the deep meaning of situations as fast as they're thrown at him. It was a cliché that was getting as tiresome as the Angry-Young-Indian one.

What's more, Bill seems to be premiering the first Puert Rican super-guy in comics. And isn't it wonderful that you can do this with such a minimum of hoopla, so matter-of-factly? Isn't it nice that you can introduce characters such as Storm of the X-Men. I read with surprise an answer to a fan to the effect that you *had* introduced a black heroine, simply because my mind had not been using such classifications for your characters as color of skin or sex, considering these secondary characteristics.

To think this strip used to be a takeoff on the cliché trio from ENTER THE DRAGON...

The art was also tremendous; George displayed an incredible vitality in his simple stylizations, excellent narration and powerful illustrations, the epitome of what American comic art should be as opposed to the arty (or artsy) spanish school that is so much in evidence over at Warren. It is ironic that George, obviously of spanish-speaking descent, should be second only to John Buscema in this genre in the black-and-white medium. I might add that Jack Abel complemented his simple lines beautifully, and that the tones were subdued enough not to detract from the clear precision of the drawing (who does the tones, anyway? If you're listening colorists in your color mags...).

If I had any reservations about plunking down my monthly Dollar for this magazine, they're gone now. See you next issue, folks, and keep on climbin'...

Kim Thompson
(Gen Del Box 259
APO NY, NY 09184)

Thanks Kim. We'll keep trying— and we hope you'll be there to record our successes and (gulp) take us to task when we fail.

Usually the inker of a strip does the tones, as is the case with Sons of the Tiger. But if we could just inject a comment concerning George Perez and your statements about "American comic art" vs "Spanish comic art" styles; we must say we are a bit confused. Artists vary so much stylistically from individual to individual that it escapes us how you can group them by nationality. Warren publishing hit upon a specific feel which they felt worked for them and, yes, they have employed a number of Spanish artists. That doesn't mean that all artists of similar nationality or origins draw in a similar style.

It's a small point, but one to keep in mind.

However, we're glad you like Powerhouse Perez's peerless pencils... unfortunately, we have bad news for you, which a look at the editorial elsewhere in this issue will fill you in on. But not to worry, Boisterous Bill and the rest of the gang will still be here!

That's all for this month. But we'll be back again in thirty days—and we need your cards, letters and in-depth critiques to get us through the monsoon. Here's the rainy-weather address:

DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU
Marvel Magazine Group
575 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

An Average Marvel Editorial

Last issue we did weapons, the issue before we focused on Chuck Norris, and before that, spray cans. So, it seems like this page is more than overdue for one of our average Marvel editorials; that is, an informal, non-specialized, off the cuff compendium of the comings, goings, and doings of our various staffers which may affect what you'll be seeing in these pages.

The biggest change, and one we're certainly sorry to announce is the departure of George Perez from SONS OF THE TIGER. Last issue's "White Tiger" episode marked George's final appearance as penciller on the feature (And quite a bow-out effort it was; the bullpen is still talking about the incredible splash page in which Mr. Perez seemingly drew every building in Manhattan—and maybe even a couple from the Bronx claims Jumping Jack Abel, who had the Herculean task of embellishing all the incredible detail on every one of said buildings. George has been tapped for permanent duty on one of Marvel's top color strip's, THE FANTASTIC FOUR. This, for those of you who have already seen the four fill-in issues he did on that title, is probably less a surprise than a pleasant inevitability. For those of you who haven't seen George's work on "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine," there's a real treat in store. Meantime, though we've lost the Pace-setting one's services as a regular in these pages, we're not about to let him vanish entirely. Not when he's been with us all the way back to issue #6. As a matter of fact, we've already got him hard at work on one of our fantastic frontspieces (and if you think it might just feature the SONS OF THE TIGER, de-

clare yourself honorary Editor for a day). Associate Editor John Warner is also twisting his arm to do illustrations for one of our up and coming articles. So, good luck with the FF, George, but always remember there's a Tiger amulet warmed up for you here.

Meantime, where does that leave SONS OF THE TIGER? Well, Boisterous Bill Mantlo, writer on the series, is only beginning to get into the many twists and turns he has in mind for the direction SONS will be taking. *White Tiger* is just the first in a long list of ideas he's been anxious to see given substance. Helping provide some of that substance this issue was Keith Giffen, who stepped in for George Perez and did a fine job of maintaining the distinctive layout approach George devised, which has become almost a trademark of the feature in recent months. Keith has worked for our color line on the science-fiction adventure series, WAR OF THE WORLDS, and he and Bill recently collaborated on an extremely off-beat creation for our preview book, MARVEL PREMIERE. It's called WOOD-GOD; and, though not yet scheduled, I think it'll be worth watching for. Also making a major contribution to SONS this issue is Rico Rival, whose illustrative approach to inks and tones brought Keith's pencils to a high finish. Rico, whose art has graced our PLANET OF THE APES magazine and the PUNISHER feature in MARVEL SUPER ACTION, stepped in for Jack Abel, who was tied up inking a 35 page adventure for the IRON MAN ANNUAL.

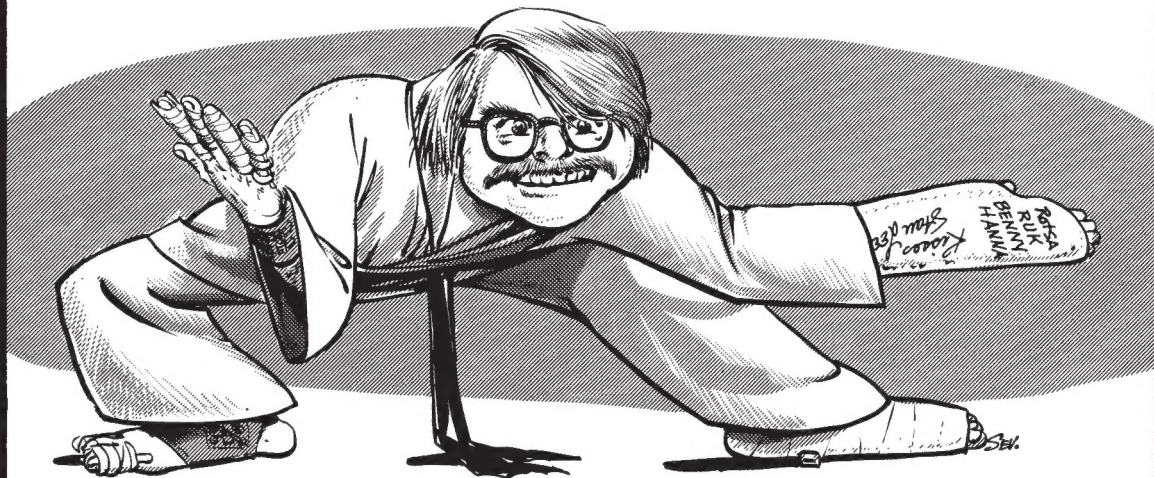
Next issue, we'll have a new regular penciller set for SONS OF THE TIGER.

Warming up for that assignment is one of Marvel's all-time favorites, Gil Kane. Gil's dynamic artwork has heightened some of our most popular strips (SPIDER-MAN, CAPT. AMERICA, CONAN), and, by way of showing that he's no slouch when it comes to the world of martial arts adventure, he was the original illustrator on IRON FIST, teaming with writer/editor Roy Thomas on its color comic debut. So, I'm writing this with crossed fingers, hoping that the garrulous Mr. Kane will be able to juggle his busy schedule to comfortably accommodate our monthly chronicles of the White Tiger and Company. We've committed you in cold print, Gil. Don't let us down now.

Finally—to maintain our eclectic and rambling style for this column—let's say welcome to Rudy Nebres, who is currently illuminating Cheerful Chris Claremont's six-part IRON FIST saga. Regular readers may be tempted to say, "What welcome? He's been doing artwork in DEADLY HANDS for about a year now!" True. But Rudy has just recently shifted his base of operations from the far-flung Philippines to the sunny shores of New Jersey. So, welcome to the United States, Rudy. We're glad to have you with us (Especially our Accounting Department. They're ecstatic over what we'll save on long distance phone calls!)

All of which pretty much covers this month's news. Until next time, and our special issue on the new wave of martial arts movies, thanks . . .

Archie Goodwin, Editor



IRON FIST

PART
4

THE LIVING WEAPON

IF THE
FIREBIRD
IS TO LIVE--

Nooooo!

TO STORM
THE GATES
OF

--IRON FIST
MUST
DIE!!

THE VOICE--THE
PRESENCE--IS
OLDER THAN
TIME--INFINITELY
SAD--PERFORMING
A TASK IT HAS AND
WILL PERFORM AN
INFINITY OF TIMES...

... 'I AM DEATH,' IT SAYS,
'I AM THE RAVAGER OF
WORLDS, THE REAPER OF
SOULS--I AM THE END
OF ALL THAT LIVES,
IRON FIST--

'--AND I AM
COME FOR THEE!'

Story: CHRIS CLAREMONT Art: RUBY NEBRES

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A COLDNESS--NOT JUST THE ABSENCE OF PAIN, BUT OF ALL FEELING AS WELL--LIKE BEING HIGH...

...FLOATING ON A CLOUD.

...IT'S ALL HAPPENING SO FAST... TOO FAST...

JADE... NO... DON'T GO AWAY... HOLD ONTO ME, JADE-- THAT WAY I'LL KNOW I'M ALIVE...

...HOLD ON, JADE, PLEASE-- I CAN'T FEEL YOUR HAND...

JADE--!!

...JADE... YOU'RE SLIPPING AWAY FROM ME... I'M LOSING YOU...

JADE IS THERE, AND YOU TRY TO TOUCH HER-- BUT NOTHING WORKS...

JADE--!

YOU HEAR HER SOBBING... AND THEN, ALMOST BEFORE YOU REALIZE WHAT'S HAPPENING...

...SHE'S GONE.

JADE, HELP ME-- I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

IS DEATH SO TERRIBLE, YOUNG DRAGON, THAT YOU SHOULD FEAR IT SO...?

I WOULD HAVE COME FOR YOU EVENTUALLY-- IN A YEAR, OR TWO, OR TEN--OR A HUNDRED...

ALL THINGS MUST END AT THEIR APPOINTED TIME, IRON FIST-- THIS WAS YOURS.

NO ONE IS... READY WHEN I COME FOR THEM, CHILD-- THAT IS THE WAY OF THINGS.

YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT IT.

WELL, I WON'T ACCEPT IT-- NOT NOW, NOT EVER!

BUT WHY NOW-- WHY HERE--?!

BUT THERE WAS SO MUCH I HAD LEFT TO DO-- JADE'S HELPLESS NOW, AND IT'S YOUR FAULT!

DAMN YOU, I WASN'T READY!!

AND HOW WILL YOU STOP ME?

LIKE THIS!

KAAA!!!

A BRILLIANT ATTACK, YOUNG DRAGON-- NO MORTAL COULD POSSIBLY STAND AGAINST IT...

... BUT I AM FAR FROM MORTAL.

GIVE UP THIS FOOLISHNESS, BOY-- IT IS NO MORE THAN AN EXERCISE IN FUTILITY.

KOP

NEVER!

FTOM

THEN YOU MUST SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES.

HA!!!

SKAM!

YOU FIGHT A BATTLE YOU CANNOT HOPE TO WIN...

... A BATTLE LOST BEFORE IT WAS EVEN BEGUN.

BECAUSE YOU MUST DIE BEFORE YOU CAN TRULY FACE ME.

YOUR BODY MUST DIE, YOUR BRAIN MUST DIE...

...ALL THE PHYSICAL ELEMENTS THAT MAKE DANIEL THOMAS RAND UNIQUE UNTO THIS LIFETIME MUST DIE!

LEAVING ONLY THE ESSENCE OF YOUR CHAI-- THAT PART OF YOUR SPIRITUAL BEING WHICH LIVES ON FROM INCARNATION TO INCARNATION, AS YOUR SOUL STRIVES EVER UPWARD TOWARDS NIRVANA.

BKAT!

FIGHT AS LONG, AS HARD, AS YOU WILL, IRON FIST-- IT WILL CHANGE NOTHING.

YOU ARE DEAD...

...AND NO POWER KNOWN TO MAN CAN RESSURECT YOU.



I'M ALIVE--
I MUST BE--!

I HEAR, SPEAK,
BREATHE, THINK--
I FEEL!
HOW CAN I DO ALL
THESE THINGS
AND BE DEAD?

THE ANSWER IS:
I CAN'T!

AND THAT
MEANS YOU'RE
AN ILLUSION--
A FAKE!

SOMETHING CONJURED UP BY **DASHA KHAN** TO CONFUSE MY MIND--
LEAVING ME **WIDE OPEN** FOR SOME
MARTIAL ARTIST TO MOVE IN AND
FINISH ME OFF!

AND, MISTER,
THAT **ISN'T**
GOING TO
HAPPEN!

FAK!

SHKWI

POOR, FOOLISH,
DESPERATE
HUMAN...

...WHY DO YOU
HANG SO
ONTO LIFE?

THE FLESH DIES... BUT
THE SPIRIT, THE IMMORTAL
SOUL, LIVES ON. IS THAT SO
FRIGHTENING AN END...?

FOR END IT IS--
FOR YOU... NOW...

YOUR WILL TO
LIVE IS A STRONG
ONE, IRON FIST--
BUT MINE IS
STRONGER.

AND MINE
WILL WIN.

IT ALWAYS
DOES.

SO SLEEP FOR A
TIME, YOUNG DRAGON--
YOUR DESTINY WILL
CATCH UP WITH YOU
SOON ENOUGH.

FALLING...

...NO THOUGHT...
ONLY THE
BAREST
SENSATION,
YOUR BODY
TWISTING OF
ITS OWN
ACCORD,
REACHING
OUT...

...GRABBING HOLD!

JUST IN TIME FOR
WENDALL RAND
TO DIE.

OH, I'LL DO
SOMETHING ALL
RIGHT, OLD
FRIEND...

...BUT I DON'T
THINK YOU'RE
GOING TO
LIKE IT!

THE
CLIMBING
SPIKES ON
HAROLD
MEACHUM'S
BOOTS DIG DEEP
INTO YOUR
FATHER'S HAND--
BUT YOU FEEL
THE PAIN...

...MORE PAIN THAN ANY MAN CAN STAND!

THE MAN HAS TIME
FOR A SINGLE
THOUGHT...

HEATHER...
MY LOVE...
I'M...
SORRY...

...AND THEN THE MAN HAS
NO TIME AT ALL.

WENDALL!
OH MY GOD--
WENDALL!!

IMAGES...
FEELINGS...
WANTS...
NEEDS...

...THOUGHTS
THAT AREN'T
YOUR OWN.

RUNNING NOW... TOWARDS
THE WOLVES... BUYING TIME SO
THAT YOU MIGHT LIVE...

...HOW LITTLE THAT MATTERED
IN THE END.

...RUNNING...
FEELING THE
FEAR CLOG IN
HER THROAT,
THE WOLF-
STENCH THICK
AROUND HER...
SO AFRAID...
SO HUNGRY
FOR LIFE...

MEMORIES OF HOW
WARM IT HAD BEEN
BACK IN NEW YORK--
HOTDOGS IN PALEY
PARK AND BUYING
SPREES AT SAK'S...
A SUDDEN, DESPERATE WISH TO SEE
SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK.

...OH GOD--IF THERE IS
A GOD--HOW MUCH SHE
WANTED TO LIVE...

MOTHER!





I'VE HEARD THAT LINE BEFORE...

...FROM DEATH HIMSELF-- THAT I WAS FACING A NOTHING, A NULL, AN EMPTY VOID.

...NO THOUGHT, FEELING, SENSATION-- A PLACE WHERE THE DANIEL RAND I WAS ON EARTH NO LONGER EXISTS.



BUT I DO EXIST.

EVERYTHING DEATH SAID I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO, I'M DOING NOW--!



DAMN YOU, JADE, WHAT KIND OF GAMES ARE YOU PEOPLE PLAYING--?!

WHAT AM I, FOR DRAGON'S SAKE--AM I DEAD, ALIVE, IN LIMBO-- WHAT!?!?

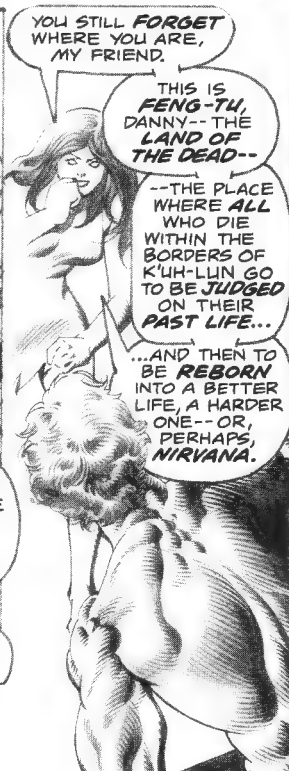


YOU'RE... ALIVE AND DEAD.

THAT'S NO ANSWER.

YOU HURT ME... DREW BLOOD... IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE A MAN-- SINCE ANYONE'S-- BEEN ABLE TO HURT ME. I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN.

BUT TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION-- YES, ALIVE AND DEAD.



YOU STILL FORGET WHERE YOU ARE, MY FRIEND.

THIS IS FENG-TU, DANNY-- THE LAND OF THE DEAD--

--THE PLACE WHERE ALL WHO DIE WITHIN THE BORDERS OF K'UH-LUN GO TO BE JUDGED ON THEIR PAST LIFE...

...AND THEN TO BE REBORN INTO A BETTER LIFE, A HARDER ONE-- OR, PERHAPS, NIRVANA.



YOU STILL EXIST IN YOUR FORMER SELF BECAUSE THAT'S THE FORM MOST FAMILIAR TO YOU...

BEFORE YOU'RE REBORN, THOUGH, YOU'LL BE SENT TO ONE OF THE YAMA-KINGS, LADY MENG, TO DRINK HER MI-HUN-T'ANG, HER BROTH OF OBLIVION SO YOU'LL REMEMBER NOTHING OF YOUR OLD LIFE.



YOU ARE DEAD, DANNY-- ACCEPT THAT FACT, ONCE AND FOR ALL, YOU'LL FEEL MUCH BETTER.

ON EARTH, YOU'D BE NO MORE THAN A PHANTOM. A... GHOST.



HOW DOES THAT EXPLAIN **YOU**, THEN? YOU WERE AS **REAL** ON EARTH AS YOU ARE NOW...

I SUPPOSE IT'S BECAUSE... I'M **NEITHER** ALIVE NOR DEAD. I'M A **SPIRIT**... I SIMPLY... **AM**.

GREAT. ANOTHER RIDDLE...

NOT REALLY.

THEN WHAT **ARE** YOU, JADE--? WHAT HAVE I GIVEN MY **LIFE** FOR?!

I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND **ANYTHING** ANYMORE. THE FIREBIRD'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOME SORT OF **IDEAL**... A SPIRIT THING, LIKE YOU SAID... A **DREAM**...

...BUT **YOU'RE** NO SPIRIT, JADE-- YOU'RE **REAL**. I KNOW YOU **ARE**-- I'VE HELD YOU IN MY **ARMS**.

REAL? I WAS REAL **ONCE**...

ALL RIGHT, DANNY-- MY YOUNG, COURAGEOUS... **LOVE**-- I'LL TELL YOU THE FIREBIRD'S STORY... MY STORY...

...A STORY TOLD TO ONLY **ONE** OTHER PERSON IN ALL THE HISTORY OF **HUMANKIND**.

THE **FIREBIRD**, OF COURSE-- I THOUGHT YOU **UNDERSTOOD** THAT.

"A STORY THAT BEGINS UNCOUNTED AEONS AGO..."

"SO FOLLOW ME BACK, DANIEL RAND, BACK **PAST** EGYPT AND BABYLON. BACK BEFORE THE **CONTINENTS** SPLIT APART..."

"...PAST THE GLORY THAT WAS KING CONAN'S AQUILONIA... PAST DAMNED ACHERON... PAST DOOMED ATLANTIS AND FABLED VALUSIA AND KULL, HER WARRIOR **KING**..."

"...BACK TO A DAY WHEN **HUMANKIND** WAS YOUNG AND THE GODS **OLD**... TO A DAY WE DREAMED OF **FREEDOM**..."



YOU SEE, HUMANKIND WAS NOT FREE IN THOSE ANCIENT, ANCIENT DAYS...

...WE WERE SLAVES TO A RACE OF OTHER-DIMENSIONAL THINGS...WHO CALLED THEMSELVES THE N'GARAI, THE ELDER GODS--WHO TOOK THE EARTH BY FIRE AND STORM, AND USED ITS PEOPLE AS PLAYTHINGS...



THE N'GARAI CONSIDERED US ANIMALS...

...TO BE BOUGHT, SOLD, PAMPERED AS PETS, WORKED TO DEATH, HUNTED, MAIMED, SHAPE-CHANGED, EATEN--ALL AS THE N'GARAI LORDS SAW FIT...



...UNTIL, ONE DAY, THE N'GARAI WERE DRIVEN FROM THE EARTH--BY THE ONE TRUE GOD, SOME SAY, THOUGH I DO NOT KNOW FOR SURE...



"I ONLY KNOW THAT THE SUN WAS BORN ANEW ON EARTH, TO KILL BY THUNDER AND HEAT AND LIGHT--THAT WHERE THE SUN FELL, THE LAND WAS POISONED AND THE SKY RAINED THE BLACK ASHES OF DEATH...THAT THIS ENTIRE WORLD WAS RE-SHAPED...

...AND THAT THE N'GARAI WERE GONE...



WHICH LEFT US WORSE OFF THAN BEFORE I THINK...

"OH, WE WERE FREE, ALL RIGHT...BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO USE THAT FREEDOM...

...WHY SHOULD WE HAVE--ALL WE KNEW OF LIFE WAS THE BESTIAL DEPRAVITY OUR ANCIENT MASTERS HAD TAUGHT US...



...AND OLD HABITS ARE HARD TO BREAK...

NO, DAMN YOUR EYES, NO--!

I'LL NOT BE TAKEN BY THE LIKES OF YOU!!

NO!!



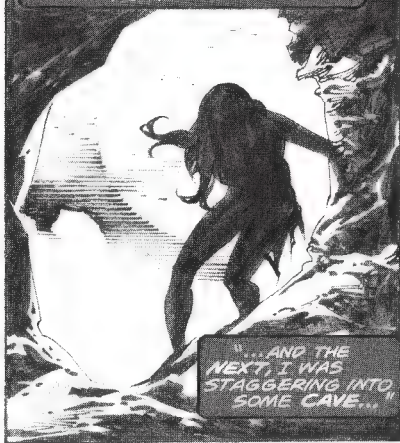
"IT WAS A LONG TIME BEFORE I STOPPED CRYING..."

"...THE PAIN NEVER STOPPED..."

"...IT TORE AT ME WITH EVERY BREATH, TWISTING WITHIN ME, FINISHING THE MURDER MY ATTACKERS HAD BEGUN..."

"I DON'T REMEMBER GETTING TO MY FEET, OR WALKING..."

"...ONE MINUTE I WAS LYING ON THE GROUND IN THE FOREST, COUGHING MY GUTS OUT IN AGONY..."

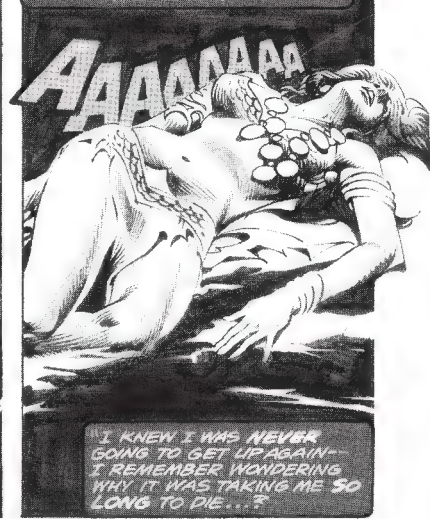


"...AND THE NEXT, I WAS STAGGERING INTO SOME CAVE..."

I WISH I'D DIED.



"THE PAIN WAS COMING IN WAVES BY THEN-- AND ONE OF THEM SLAMMED ME DOWN-- HARD..."



"I KNEW I WAS NEVER GOING TO GET UP AGAIN-- I REMEMBER WONDERING WHY IT WAS TAKING ME SO LONG TO DIE..."

"THAT'S WHEN I SAW THE LIGHT..."

W-WHAT...?

IS ANYONE THERE? PLEASE, I'M... BADLY HURT. COULD YOU... HELP ME, KIND SIR...

...IN MERCY'S NAME, HELP...

SIR, YOUR LIGHT-- IT'S BLINDING ME...

...YOUR LIGHT... SO BRIGHT... SO BRIGHT IT... HURTS--!

MY EYES!!

THAT WAS AS FAR AS I GOT..."

ZZRAPT!

AAHHHRRRR!



JADE... **DON'T**...
NO MORE,
PLEASE...



THE BEAM HAD **BLINDED**
ME, BUT... I COULD
STILL... **FEEL...**

...THE CAVE
BEGAN TO
GET HOT,
TERRIBLY
HOT...



MY CLOTHES CAUGHT **FIRE**...
THEN MY HAIR... MY **SKIN**...

...THE PAIN WAS
UNIMAGINABLE...
BUT I COULDN'T
SCREAM,
COULDN'T BREATHE--
I HAD **NO**
LUNGS...

"I WASN'T **HUMAN**
ANYMORE, JUST
A **HUMANOID**...
ANIMAL-THING
WRITHING
ABOUT THE
CAVE IN
AGONY,
PRAYING FOR
A **DEATH**
THAT
REFUSED
TO **COME**..."



...AND THEN, I WASN'T
EVEN A **HUMANOID**...

...MY **ARMS**... **CHANGED**...
ELONGATED, LIGHTENED, MY
MY **SKIN** TURNING TO
IRRIDESCENT **FIRE** AS **FLESH**
BECAME **FEATHERS**, **ARMS**
BECAME **WINGS**...



"...AND THE
FIREBIRD
WAS BORN!"





THE HOUR BEFORE DAWN: A
QUIET TIME, NATURE'S TIME...
THE AIR STILL, HUSHED, THE
SILENCE NOT YET BROKEN BY
BY WAKING THINGS...

...A REFLECTIVE HOUR, AN HOUR
WHERE MEN CAN LOOK AROUND
THEM AND MARVEL AT HOW
BEAUTIFUL THE WORLD IS, HOW
BEAUTIFUL... LIFE... IS...

SOME MEN, ANYWAY.

WE FOUND THIS *WENCH* WANDERING
ABOUT AFTER *CURFEW*, SAID SHE
WAS LOOKING FOR HER DOG THAT
HAD *RUN AWAY*.

CAN YOU
BELIEVE IT,
MY FRIENDS,
HER DOG!

BUT SHE WAS IN
VIOLATION OF THE
CURFEW, SO STRAIGHT-
AWAY WE DECIDED TO
TEACH HER A
LESSON...

ANYWAY, VIKTOR *HELD* THE
WENCH WHILE THE REST OF
US *PREPARED OURSELVES*...

...HEY, *TOMAS*,
ARE YOU NOT
INTERESTED...?

NO, *PEDAR*. I
AM NOT
INTERESTED.

ON A MORNING LIKE *THIS*, TALES
OF YOUR *BAWDY* CONQUESTS ARE
AN *AFFRONT*...

YOUR
PARDON,
MOST
NOBLE
GUARDSMAN
TOMAS...

OH,
HELLSTEETH,
BOY, *EASE UP!*
MORNINGS SUCH
AS THIS ARE
COMMON
ENOUGH. BUT
A WENCH LIKE
THE ONE WE
FOUND...

BOWMAN?

THERE'S *NOTHING* I CAN DO, LITTLE
ONE--I CAN *DROP* THE BOY
EASILY ENOUGH IF HE SPOTS *IRON*
FIST...

...BUT HIS *COMPANIONS* WILL
STILL BE ALIVE TO RAISE THE
ALARM. AND ONCE *THAT'S*
DONE...

...WE'RE
LOST.

PEDAR, YOU ARE
DISGUSTING. HAVE
YOU *NO* SENSE OF
NATURE'S BEAUTY...?

NOT UNLESS IT WALKS
ON *TWO* LEGS, MY
FRIEND.

COMPARED TO A *BUXOM*
WENCH, ALL ELSE MEANS
NAUGHT.

IN ANOTHER TIME,
ANOTHER PLACE-- PERHAPS.

IN ANOTHER REALITY--ANOTHER
TIME STREAM, PERHAPS--TOMAS
SAW IRON FIST, RAISED THE
ALARM-- THEREBY CAUSING THE
FIREBIRD'S SOUL, AND ALL
MANKIND ALONG WITH IT, TO BE
DAMNED FOREVER.

BUT NOT HERE--
AND NOT NOW!

KAH!!!

BDAM!





SHOULDN'T HAVE LISTENED TO THAT PEDAR-CHARACTER, SHOULDN'T HAVE LET WHAT HE SAID GET TO ME...

...LOST MY TEMPER, LOST CONTROL, AND HIT THEM TOO HARD...

...AND WITH MY SKILL, LOSING CONTROL LIKE THAT COULD KILL SOMEBODY.

WHAT WAS IT LEI KUNG SAID! THE MARK OF A TRUE WARRIOR IS THAT HE NEVER KILLS, UNLESS HE CHOOSES TO...

...BUT NEVER, EVER, BY ACCIDENT.

ENOUGH BABBLING IRON FIST--TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE THIS MORNING, AND RIGHT NOW, YOU'RE WASTING IT.



IRON FIST, ARE YOU--?

I'M FINE, JADE--

--NOW GET UNDER COVER WHILE I PULL BOWMAN UP THE WALL.



A MINUTE LATER...

NICE WORK, LAD-- ESPECIALLY THAT NINJA WALL CLIMBING TRICK OF YOURS...

...IF WE EVER GET OUT OF THIS MESS, I'D LIKE YOU TO TEACH IT TO ME.

I WISH IT WERE THAT EASY.



ALL RIGHT, LET'S GO OVER THE PLAN **ONE LAST TIME**: IRON FIST, YOU HOLD THE MAIN GATE OPEN FOR THE ARMY OF THE YAMA-KINGS...

...WHILE JADE AND I HEAD FOR DHASHA KHAN'S CITADEL TO RESCUE HER SOUL...

BOWMAN, PLEASE... COULD I HAVE A MOMENT WITH IRON FIST...

JADE, MY LADY, THERE'S NO TIME...

...EACH SECOND WE WASTE HERE WILL COST US AT THE CITADEL...



DHASHA KHAN DOESN'T HAVE TO KILL US, YOU KNOW-- ALL HE HAS TO DO IS DELAY US.

TIME IS ON HIS SIDE, JADE.

WE'VE GOT TO GO-- NOW!





BOWMAN, YOUR WOUND'S NOT THAT **SERIOUS...**

GODS OF K'UN-LUN... **JADE!**

IRON FIST--
**DANNY!--MY...
GOD! THE PAIN.
LORD OF US ALL,
THE...PAIN!!**

**DEVIL'S BONES, MAN, WHAT
DOES IT TAKE TO CONVINCE
YOU--JADE'S BODY TURNED TO
ASHES IN YOUR ARMS?!**

THERE'S NO MORE
TIME, BOY--SO
TAKE JADE AND GO!
GO!!

GOD PRESERVE US--WE'RE
**DEFEATED BEFORE WE'VE
EVEN BEGUN.**

I'VE BEEN SHAPED, HONED BY
UNCOUNTED CENTURIES OF
**WARFARE--YOU BY NONE--I
MIGHT HAVE BEATEN PHASHA
KHAN, IRON FIST...**

...BUT
YOU...?

I FEEL **BETTER, DANNY--**
AND TO HAVE COME SO
**FAIR UNDETECTED, I
WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED
IT POSSIBLE...**

I THINK YOU'RE A
**BETTER CHAMPION
THAN BOWMAN, MY
LOVE. I BELIEVE
IN YOU.**

I'M...
HONORED...



YOU KNOW, I THINK YOU **ARE**. SOME-
TIMES, MY LOVE, YOU ARE SO **SERIOUS**
IT'S ALMOST FUNNY--I'M SORRY I
SHOULDN'T **LAUGH** AT A TIME LIKE THIS.

DANNY,
ARE YOU
SCARED?

OF COURSE
I'M SCARED...

...BUT **HUSH**
NOW, JADE,
WE'RE
**ALMOST AT
THE BRIDGE.**

THERE IT IS, JADE -- THE
**HOW NAI-HO. THE RIVER OF
HELL.**

ALL WE HAVE TO DO
NOW, IS CROSS THE
**K'U-CH'U-CH'IAO, THE
BRIDGE OF PAIN, AND THEN
WE'RE PRETTY MUCH
HOME FREE...**

BUT SURELY, THAT
SHOULDN'T BE TOO
**HARD. I MEAN WE'VE
COME THIS FAR...**

**TRUE ENOUGH, CHILD OF
THE GODS, YOU HAVE
COME THIS FAR...**

...THE **PITY** OF IT IS,
THAT YOU'VE COME HERE
ONLY TO **FAIL.**

**SILVER
DRAGON--!**

I WAS
**WONDERING
WHEN WE
WERE GOING
TO RUN
INTO YOU.**



YOU MEAN I WAS EXPECTED? HOW FLATTERING. BUT THEN, WHO ELSE WOULD YOU EXPECT AFTER ENTERING THE KUEI-MEN-KUAN, THE GATE OF DEMONS?

I HAVE NO WISH TO FIGHT YOU, IRON FIST, BUT MY MASTER HAS CHARGED ME TO HOLD THIS BRIDGE ON PERIL OF MY... SOUL...

I'M NOT STOPPING, SILVER DRAGON--FOR I, TOO, AM FIGHTING FOR A SOUL. JADE'S SOUL.

THEN COME YOU ON, YOUNG FOOL! IF YOU'RE SO EAGER TO DIE YOUR FINAL DEATH...

...THEN I'LL BE MORE THAN PLEASED TO KILL YOU!

NEXT ISSUE:
BRIDGE OF SORROW,
BRIDGE OF PAIN!

**“THE BIRTH
OF THE
DRAGON:**



**THE BEGINNINGS
OF
KUNG-FU”**

by Steve Clement



It is not unusual to ride through any well-populated city in these present times and see many, many different types and styles of Karate and Kung-Fu schools springing up faster than the eye can follow. They appear, place a sign in the window or hang one from the building front, and they are almost guaranteed to become a working concern.

Kung-Fu especially is enjoying widespread notoriety after the television series of the same name, the varied and yet similar paperbacks devoted to the adventures of Kung-Fu heroes, and those wonderful martial-arts movies that have replaced spaghetti westerns in the hearts of the matinee crowd. So much so, in fact, that many people have come to take it for granted without ever really knowing what 'Kung-Fu' is.

In truth, Kung-Fu is many things, and many definitions. It is a term sometimes used to express power, or training in the martial arts. Sometimes it means a healer, one who has been trained in a different category of Kung-Fu. At other times it stands for wisdom, the knowledge of scholarly achievements, or a true student of eastern philosophy. But most of all Kung-Fu is a way of life. It is the total study of all the arts which are encompassed by its definition. In truth, Kung-Fu is more a spirit, an idea, than it is a martial arts form.

The public sees Kung-Fu as a form of self-defense. And while this aspect is an important segment of the art, it is only one segment. Kung-Fu, from its most humble beginnings, has grown to include so many varied and singular categories that any student who was able to master all the demands of the Kung-Fu way of life was called master, or *sifu*. But it did not begin with a master. In fact, it almost did not begin, but for the genius of one man. Huang-Ti; The Yellow Emperor.

I.

Kung-Fu comes from a past that few Americans can even imagine; It began over five thousand years ago, someplace within the boundaries of China. Its first recorded use occurred in the year 2674 B.C. with the coming of the Yellow Emperor. Huang-Ti, then a master planner and warrior, had been facing a long and dangerous campaign against an opposing warlord. The warlord had Huang-Ti's men outnumbered twice over, but to turn and run would be to lose face. Among the high-born Asians of that time, death was always the preferred alternative. It gave Huang-Ti precious little time to think of something; less than two months before the attacking hoards would be within his jurisdiction. But Huang-Ti was a

brilliant strategist and had long been experimenting with a personal ideology of his own.

Upon observing battles, Huang-Ti watched a handful of men attack an equal amount of men, to the expected result; most of the men fought, and fought well, but they fought for themselves, giving little or no heed to their fellows. And when they fought with their weapons they also attacked like a man possessed, but again every man for himself.

And therein, The Yellow Emperor found the flaw.

Huang-Ti spent the next week devising the most basic training and attack plans for his men. He called this teaching Chiou-Ti. It was the first form of Kung-Fu. He taught them how to use a weapon in a similar manner, how to attack in teams, how to defend yourselves if you were attacked without a weapon, but most of all, he taught them a most important secret; do not attack. This philosophy was so against what his troops were used to that there was almost a rebellion among his commanding chiefs, but they were well trained, and one did not challenge the Yellow Emperor lightly. But Huang-Ti noticed the dissent and legend has it that Huang-Ti called all of his commanding officers into his Throne Room and selected the biggest three present and told them to choose their weapons and either attack him all at once or one at a time. The men, puzzled, but seeing a chance to kill the Emperor and rule in his place, elected to take turns and chose among them to see who would have the right to attack first. A commander of a large division of calvary was the winner of the drawing and attacked Huang-Ti with a two-ended pike, similar to a spear with two heads. Huang-Ti then amazed his onlookers by going to meet the man unarmed. Huang-Ti stood there motionless until the man gave out with a scream and charged. The Yellow Emperor waited, totally at peace with himself, until the very last second, when he jumped aside, and then spun on the man, landing on his back, driving the pike through the mans own chest.

The other two men, upon viewing this amazing contest, attacked without warning only to see the Yellow Emperor reach, not for a sword or axe to fend them off, but for the very end of the now-broken pike upon which the man had been impaled. Seeing an easy target they charged the Emperor only to find him in the middle of some kind of gesture-filled dance. Thinking that the man had taken leave of his mind, they slowed and stopped, as if to observe his odd behavior.

In a flash the Emperor was between them, pike head in hand, and had plucked out an eye from each of them. It had convinced the others; they would train their men in this new way, and it would not be long before this new way of combat would be put to the test. The invaders were only weeks away.

The weeks passed quickly but even the most ignorant foot-soldier was able to absorb the basic movements and weapon lessons which their superiors handed down from the emperor. The final night of peace came and went, and come the dawn the Yellow Emperor stood upon a high hill and watched as his men rose to meet the invaders. As they first joined, it seemed as if the Emperor's men would suffer terrible losses from the terrific force of the opponents charge, but, upon holding their ground, the tide soon turned and the badly outnumbered Emperor's troops soon began to force the enemy back, and then back again. Finally, trapping what was now an equal number of their opponents in an exitless valley, Huang-Ti's men proceeded to methodically attack their opponents and totally destroy all the soldiers of the opposing forces. Kung-Fu had made a successful debut.

For some unknown reason, Huang-Ti's teachings, Chiou-Ti, disappeared shortly after this. No other styles appeared until almost 2600 B.C., when the evil warlord, Chi-Yu, invented a 'sport' called Go-Ti, a sadistic game designed to punish disobedient soldiers. Chi-Yu would force the soldiers to fight each other in an arena, while wearing helmets with two long, sharp horns. The object of the 'game' was to gore the opponent to death. Hence that name, Go-Ti. (Translated into Horn-Gore.) The contests called for some pretty fancy footwork, just to stay alive.

At the same time that Go-Ti was taking place, another interesting event was beginning. Scholar-Monks of the Fifth Century B.C. were spreading the practice of an ancient series of medical practices called Cong-Fu. These practices dated back to the Yellow Emperor, Huang-Ti, who had nationalized the art of medicine by appointing medical agents and sending them through the different provinces to prescribe and teach the proper treatments for common illnesses. These medical exercises marked the beginning of that limb of Kung-Fu which is orientated towards health and breathing gymnastics.

It was recorded later, sometime during the seventh century, that "Without Boxing (Kung Fu*) techniques, a man is relegated to the lower ranks of the army." A very strong reason for young men, who had to put their time in the service of the Emperor's Army, to learn Kung Fu.

II.

Perhaps one of those people who is least connected with Kung-Fu had the most to do with its development—the great philosopher, Confucius. In the sixth century he announced that it was essential to cultivate the martial arts. Confucius himself was undoubtedly familiar with the martial arts, and it is assumed that his students were also. Confucius believed "... as there are literary arts, so there should be military arts." His opinion influenced many and Kung-Fu moved closer into public domain.

Lao Tzu, another great sage of Confucius' time, had an even more significant influence upon the martial art as he was a great believer in Taoism (pronounced "Dow-ism"), which utilized many of the same exercises that Kung-Fu did. In fact, Lao Tzu's knowledge was rapidly incorporated into the growing school of Kung-Fu. Taoism Monks became known as being very proficient in Kung-Fu, and became almost legend for their mastery of the many assorted weapons used in Kung-Fu. It is during this period that the Kung-Fu acquired a code of defending the weak and helpless, representing the justice that evildoers would have to face if they harmed anyone.

Despite all that was done in its favor, Kung-Fu did not quite catch the public's fancy until the Han Dynasty came into being. The emperor Han Wu Ti is largely responsible for its popularity because he himself was an ardent student and devotee of the art. Around 100 B.C., Han Wu Ti made public contest of Kung-Fu and brought back a slightly altered (and less deadly) version of Go-Ti. This met with instant public approval and brought the Emperor and the martial arts much public popularity.

Some Two Hundred Years after the death of Han Wu Ti,

one of his subjects and students, Hua T'o, studied the medical aspects of Kung-Fu again. As a result of these studies, he created a series of exercises modeled after the actions of animals. Called 'The Frolics of the Five Animals,' said frolics consisted of the movements of the Tiger, Deer, Monkey, Bear, and Bird. The exercises themselves consisted of jumping, crawling, contracting, rotating, twisting, swaying, and falling. This was a major exploration in to why Kung-Fu practitioners were so healthy, and this encouraged many new students to join the Kung-Fu way of life.

With the opening of the years A.D., at the advent of the Han Han era, Kung-Fu entered its first modern renaissance. Hon Han was an emperor of unusual insight. He realized that any fighter who depended entirely upon brute force would eventually be defeated by brute force. It was then that a man named Kwok Yee came to him with an idea for countering just that deficiency.

Kwok Yee developed what is known as the 'long hand' style. This style was designed to permit a man to defeat opponents from further away, utilizing the feet and jumping attacks more than actual close-quarter combat. Since most of the styles up until that time had dealt with only hand-to-hand techniques, this advancement was of particular importance. And it was from this style that Kung-Fu eventually got the reputation of its masters being able to defeat heavily armed opponents with their bare hands.

Then, in 520 A.D., came the beginning of Kung-Fu as we know it.

III.

In 520 A.D., the Buddhist monk, Ta Mo, came to China. Why he came is uncertain. Some say that he was captured during a military skirmish; others say that he came to bring Buddhism to the "heathen Chinese." But, for whatever reason, Ta Mo stayed in China for the rest of his life. Upon his first meeting with the Emperor, Ta Mo asked and was allowed to retreat to the now almost legendary Shaolin Temple. For the first ten years that he spent there, Ta Mo worked eighteen hours every day to train himself physically and spiritually, in preparation for the long task that only *he* knew lay ahead.

When Ta Mo first arrived at the Shaolin temple, he found the monks to be in the worst physical shape imaginable, unable to even meditate for long periods without becoming exhausted. Immediately Ta Mo combined Zen-Buddist Style meditation with Hatha-Yoga, and created the *18 Movements of the Arhan Hands*, to strengthen breathing for the long physical development course which lay ahead for the monks, and *18 Monk Boxing*, which was used to develop the under-exercised monks. These exercises soon proved to be so popular with his students that Ta Mo began to expand his teachings, creating several additional exercise courses such as the *Sinew Changing Course*, and the *Marrow Washing Course*. Yet, Kung-Fu did not come into its own as a fighting art until after Ta Mo's death in 557 A.D.

While all this training continued after Ta Mo's death, the Shaolin Temple did not come into national prominence until the beginning of the Emperor Tang's dynasty in the eighth century. During this time, the Emperor Tang asked the learned monks to take a hand and do their part in combating an invasion.

When the invaders sent a small group of soldiers up to the

*King Fu is not specifically the proper translation here. As stated before, it is a word of many meanings. Chuan Fa might be more appropriate. However, for simplification, we will use the Westernized application of "Kung Fu."

Monastery, it was expected they would kill or imprison the monks and return immediately. But time passed and it seemed that the soldiers had met an army troop or perhaps met with some other kind of serious delay, so another troop of soldiers was sent to investigate the missing ones. They too, did not return. Over the next week, troops were dispatched almost daily to the Shaolin Temple, with no word returning to the main camp. Seeing something seriously wrong, the commander of the invading troops, outnumbering the Shaolin Monks with his remaining troops by about five to one, moved onto the Shaolin Temple. Within an hour upon their arrival the monks tricked the soldiers off into all directions of the huge monastery, separating them into small groups. And with nothing but their own knowledge of Kung-Fu, the Monks managed to kill off every last one of the invaders, providing the breach in the opposing Warlords invasion plan. Emperor Tang soon put the invaders to rout.

Because of the almost-magical way which the Shaolin Monks defeated the invaders, they became famous throughout China, almost overnight. Sometime later, in the Hou Tang Dynasty, about the year 800 A.D., a clever Shaolin Monk named Sze Hungpey devised the 'Feinting Hand' technique that introduced the degree of almost awesome legerdemain to the art. With this addition, the Shaolin style of Kung-Fu became the most respected and feared in all of China.

In the year 1000, The Emperor Sung Tai Jo founded his Sung Dynasty. Sung, a true master of Kung-Fu in his own right, decided that rather than continue to learn any given style of Kung-Fu, he would create his own, which he did. A style called 'Long Fist.' To this day, the Long Fist style is still popular around the world and recognized as a major branch of the art. A sudden boom in the Long Hand style caused the popularity of the Shaolin Temple to fade, and they would not return to acclaim for almost five hundred years.

One of the Sung Dynasty's Generals, Yao Fei, made some modifications in the Long Fist style, allowing it to include the use of weapons training. Yao was a master at such armed forms of combat. This particular style of weapons fighting is called 'Shan Shou,' meaning the Eagle Claw system, and Yao's style was the first instance of a weapon technique system being used as a model for unarmed combat as well. Using these refined techniques, Yao's later students went one step further and created still another influential branch, called *Yee Chuen*, which, oddly enough, translated as Intellectual Fist.

All of these styles had one thing in common, though. They were all styles with the emphasis on power, strength, speed, force . . . They were all dynamic styles. With the coming of Chang San-Fung, a Taoist monk, Kung-Fu would undergo its most lasting change.

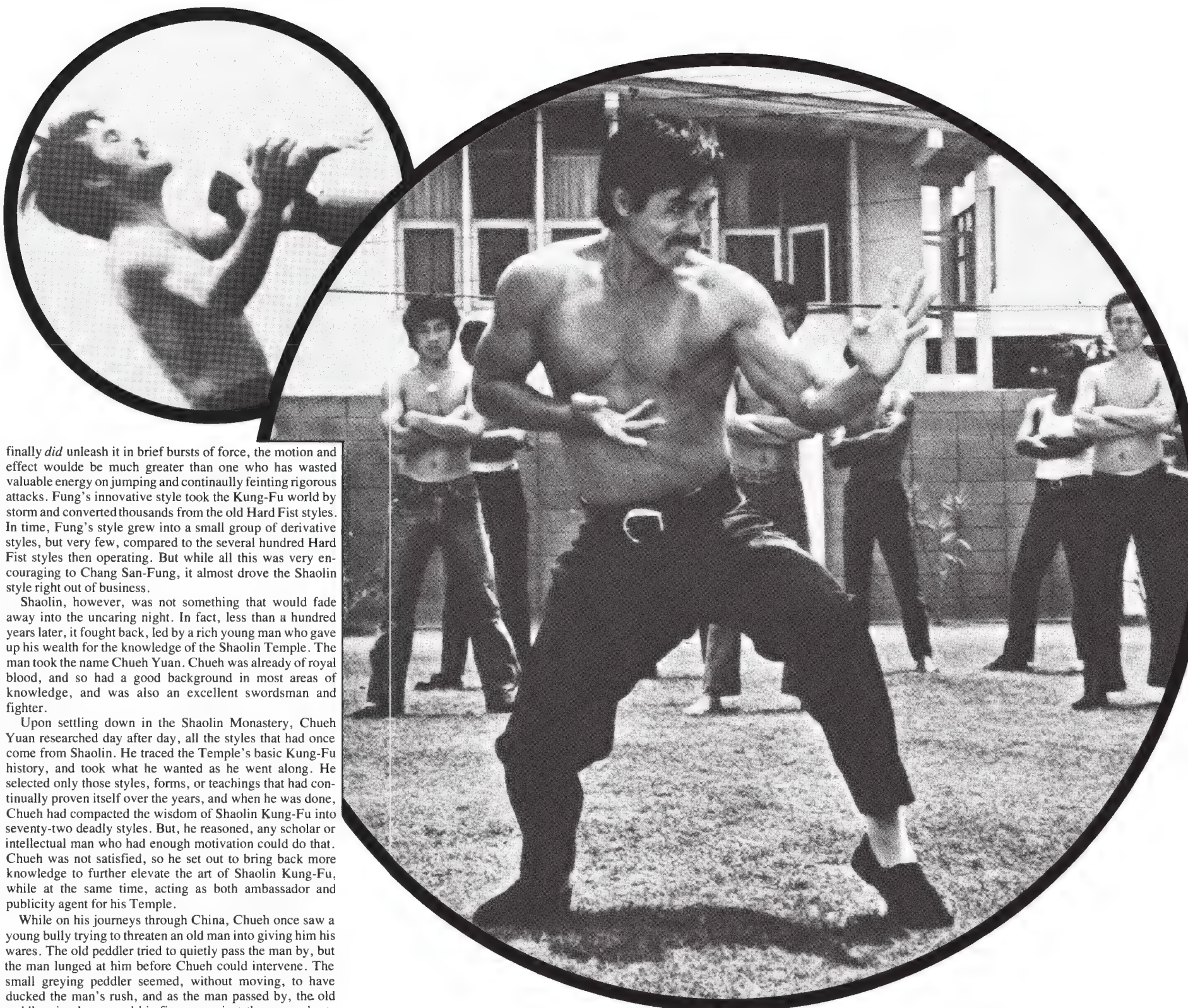
Chang San-Fung believed that all the force, sweating and exercise that Long Fist styles used was contrary to the true spirit of Buddhism. So he devised a new style, a style referred to as the 'Soft Fist' or 'Internal Style.' Unlike the external or 'Long Fist' styles, this new style was done with much less emphasis on brute strength and raw power to achieve an end. Rather, this soft fist style was performed slower, with much less visible effort, so that the style in progress looked more like a form of ballet than a style of Kung-Fu. But the power built with the slower body motions was phenomenal! The slower that a man's power built, Fung believed, the more strength he could gather. And when he

finally *did* unleash it in brief bursts of force, the motion and effect would be much greater than one who has wasted valuable energy on jumping and continually feinting rigorous attacks. Fung's innovative style took the Kung-Fu world by storm and converted thousands from the old Hard Fist styles. In time, Fung's style grew into a small group of derivative styles, but very few, compared to the several hundred Hard Fist styles then operating. But while all this was very encouraging to Chang San-Fung, it almost drove the Shaolin style right out of business.

Shaolin, however, was not something that would fade away into the uncaring night. In fact, less than a hundred years later, it fought back, led by a rich young man who gave up his wealth for the knowledge of the Shaolin Temple. The man took the name Chueh Yuan. Chueh was already of royal blood, and so had a good background in most areas of knowledge, and was also an excellent swordsman and fighter.

Upon settling down in the Shaolin Monastery, Chueh Yuan researched day after day, all the styles that had once come from Shaolin. He traced the Temple's basic Kung-Fu history, and took what he wanted as he went along. He selected only those styles, forms, or teachings that had continually proven itself over the years, and when he was done, Chueh had compacted the wisdom of Shaolin Kung-Fu into seventy-two deadly styles. But, he reasoned, any scholar or intellectual man who had enough motivation could do that. Chueh was not satisfied, so he set out to bring back more knowledge to further elevate the art of Shaolin Kung-Fu, while at the same time, acting as both ambassador and publicity agent for his Temple.

While on his journeys through China, Chueh once saw a young bully trying to threaten an old man into giving him his wares. The old peddler tried to quietly pass the man by, but the man lunged at him before Chueh could intervene. The small greying peddler seemed, without moving, to have ducked the man's rush, and as the man passed by, the old peddler simply pressed his fingers against the man's chest, and the young man lapsed into unconsciousness.



Amazed, Chueh rushed over and asked who the man was. The man, a shy retiring fellow called Li Chieng, said that he had once spent a few months in the province of Honan, studying with the greatest acknowledged master of the martial arts, Pai Yu-Feng. The peddler then apologized to Chueh for having been so sloppy in his execution of defense, and asked, if Chueh saw his master, to not make mention of Li's poor showing, for he did not want his master to know that he had disgraced the knowledge he had been given.

Chueh, totally amazed, quickly asked where to find this Pai Yu-Feng. Li told him that the master was the greatest living martial arts man within the entire provinces of Honan, Shansi and Hopeh . . . which, at that time, comprised over a third of China. And that Pai Yu-Feng would be at his temple in Honan.

Chueh made his way to the temple and was received by the Master Yu-Feng. At this time Pai Yu-Feng was just reaching the end of middle age, and was at the very peak of his powers. He listened intently to what Chueh proposed to do, in elevating the Shaolin Temple and the arts of Kung-Fu back to its old heights of glory, and was impressed with the young man's ambition. In fact, Pai was so impressed that he returned with Chueh to the Shaolin Temple where these two great minds met and worked together for some time.

Within a year, the team of Pai and Chueh had broken down Chueh Yuan's earlier work of defining the Shaolin style into seventy-two distinct movements, and soon, between them, Pai and Chueh had more than a hundred and fifty separate actions, which were then categorized down into one of five styles, all of which were represented by different members of the animal kingdom. Supposedly they were so named because each style's motions resembled the corresponding animal's movements.

The five separate styles are; The Dragon, The Tiger, The Leopard, The Snake, and The Crane.

Each style possessed the complete art that a student should be capable of absorbing before moving on to the next one, which is totally different from present day where a novice is given a basic background in all styles and taught to grow on from there. The students were then expected to go forth into the world from the Monastery and search for new forms of areas of worth, to gain personal involvement.

Of these five aforementioned styles, each grew to represent factors within man, and these definitions of the Kung-Fu essences still hold true today:

Dragon: Designed to nurture the spirit.

Tiger: Trains the bones to resist and recover from heavy shocks or blows.

Leopard: Develops strength and speed.

Crane: Trains the sinews and muscles.

Snake: Builds *Chi*. (Inner strength, belief in oneself, stamina from within.)

While these final designations by Chueh and Pai Yu-Feng were not the be-all and end-all of Kung-Fu as we know it, by any means, it was the foundation from which all that we know as Kung-Fu has eventually grown.

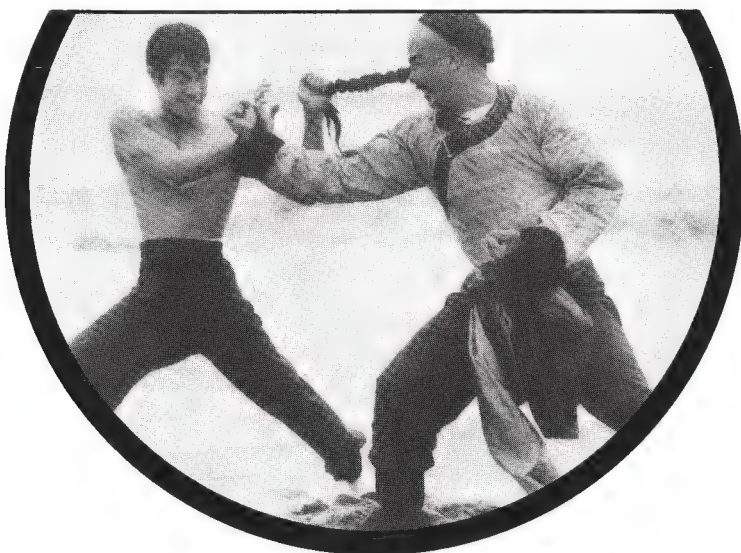
Although these designations were tremendously successful, the Shaolin Temple was almost destroyed a scarce century later, not by a declining style but because of an overpowering invasion by a powerful border tribe, the Manchus.

Still, the Shaolin Temple survived, fought back as it always has. Eventually winning its autonomy and freedom once again and, while its pure style is not often seen in modern times, its off-shoots surround us whenever we see, think, or participate in Kung-Fu. Shaolin was the 'garden' from which the eventual Dragon grew.

All during the formative years for this martial art, China, a very sexist and hierarchy-oriented country in early times, and still, to date, having a reputation for such ideologies, made one exception; In Kung-Fu, there were both male and female students of Kungfu and both sexes produced 'masters,' and these masters were respected by all, irregardless of their sex. A true Kung-Fu practitioner has always been respected, if not revered, as in some early provinces of Asia. It seems that Kung-Fu is a step *beyond* that which most of us participate in from day to day life and that those who are truly its masters have always, and will always have, the respect and honor that they so justly deserve.

It is unfortunate that, in its development, Kung-Fu lost some of its medicinal factors, and its meditative values, but such is the price the ages have been paid to allow the art of Kung-Fu to survive. It is a powerful art, an amazing tribute to those men responsible for its origins, no matter how humble, and for us it will always remain the symbol of tempered strength with wisdom in life, and a tribute to human abilities.

Men . . . Their governments . . . Their amusements. They will all come and go, before, during, and after our lifetimes. But through it all . . . there is always . . . the Dragon.



A Review of Verina Glaessner's Book

by David Anthony Kraft

This is one of those good commercial ideas that I kick myself for not having had the foresight to employ on my own. Already, since its publication, **KUNG FU: CINEMA OF VENGEANCE** has become a standard handbook for devotees of martial arts movies. As such, it proves a convenient and valuable source of data and photos from those popular but unacknowledged cousins of legitimate cinema that we sporadically review in **DEADLY HANDS**, but that most mainstream film critics ignore or dismiss as unworthy of serious attention.

To be fair, I have to confess that when John Warner rummaged through a desk drawer and tendered to me as my next assignment the volume presently under review, it was a role reversal from those former days when I had fulfilled the position of Associate Editor and John that of freelance writer, and it hinted strongly to me of a revenge motive, since I

expected to find little merit in the book and I suspected that this was the reason John had provided reviewing it himself.

Contrary to my groundless expectations, Ms. Glaessner's light, engaging manner put me at ease even as it evoked a certain envy of her style. She has a way of importing prodigious quantities of facts, figures and information in deceptively smooth reading chunks of text that thoroughly succeeded in capturing my attention, interest—and respect.

Of course, Verina Glaessner is no stranger to cinema, having spent years as an editor/reviewer for various film journals, and she astutely determined the need for such a book and proceeded to fill it in the time-honored tradition of the enterprising freelance writer, I hate her. But I can't fault the quality of her analytic prose. Ms. Glaessner's approach is not to examine particular movies at length but rather to explore general trends, traditions and acting careers.

She has done her homework, as they say, and it shows.

For instance, I'm always fascinated by revelations like the following (one of *but many* in the book): Script writers average \$1250 per film, which is about the same as cheap

paperback publishers in the U.S. pay for back novels. Such economy means authors must resort to formulas in order to maintain the heavy constant flow of work necessary for basic survival. Thus, it is not only low script rates which Kung-Fu movies have in common with cheap paperbacks, but also (as a consequence) predictable plots and countless amounts of clichés.

The same diminished scale of remuneration applies to all the rest of the positions offered on these cut-rate productions. Verina accurately labels Kung-Fu "poverty row cinema," detailing the system under which actors are hired on a sort of staff basis at a weekly salary to make movies on an assembly line schedule. Entire features have been completed for under \$200,000 yet have earned well over one million dollars in return on the world theatre circuit.

If the Kung-Fu film genre is to transcend its humble origins and aspire to any serious stature in the motion picture arts, these conditions must improve in tandem with a refining process that will deliver the product from unrestrained crudity to respectable cinema. Perhaps an increasing sophistica-

tion is even necessary to retain the audience that, weaned on wanton high action and dynamic displays of martial arts violence, is no longer content and seems to demand more and more elements of good cinema now that the novelty of big screen Kung-Fu has worn off.

But that's talk of the future; Verina Glaessner's book deals only with the very recent past, acting as an eyewitness record and combination overview of the field.

It's certainly no secret to any regular reader of **DEADLY HANDS** that the martial arts movie movement has produced its own handful of superstars, and, gratefully, Ms. Glaessner devotes a chapter each to Bruce Lee, Angela Mao, Wang Yu, and David Chiang & Ti Lung, replete with data on their careers and short plot summaries of their most noteworthy film appearances. Her coverage, of course, only extends to early 1974.

An item I found personally satisfying was the indisputable evidence that Verina Glaessner is familiar with the Marvel line of publications, as indicated by her direct reference to the Incredible Hulk, and her indirect reference to the fictional

KUNG FU: CINEMA OF VENGEANCE



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star-in-absentia of this magazine, Shang-Chi. I should greatly enjoy meeting her in person sometime and exchanging stories, except that she would then be able to take me to task for this rambling review.

KUNG-FU: CINEMA OF VENGEANCE is physically a handsome quality paperback with heavy covers and is well-endowed with numerous photos to accompany the magazine-style two-column text layout of the inside pages. Flipping through it is more like browsing through a magazine than a manual, with the added benefit of good paper and no ads. Unfortunately, the binding is a trifle weak, but even so the modest \$2.95 which publisher Bounty Books is asking seems very reasonable, especially considering current popular newsstand paperback prices. As a bonus there's even a brief chapter printed in full color on glossy stock, devoted exclusively to reproductions of the original art for select Kung-Fu movies (though most of the art is extraordinarily crude by current U.S. standards for similar feature releases, and one quick look confirms they've even established a color formula, judging by seven of the eight posters: Red and Yellow).

CINEMA OF VENGEANCE is not a handbook of the martial arts. It's a study of the Kung-Fu trend in movies, and it's packed with incidental information that is rarely discussed in newsstand publications that address themselves more to the art of Kung-Fu than to its manifestations in the media. Merely for the plethora of details on budgets, salaries, and gross takes, along with production notes, background info and biogs of the key stars, this book is worthwhile reading for the cinema buff. Combined with the brief synopsis of many releases and the chronology of the Kung-Fu trend in the movies, it is a key item for anyone at all interested in the celluloid history of the genre.

The book is obviously a special interest volume, but if you're into martial arts movies, then I most highly recommend it.

—David Anthony Kraft
21 October 75



Before Bruce Lee there was Ching Pei Pei. For years the beautiful swordswoman was the reigning star of the Chinese martial arts movies and even today there are many long-time enthusiasts who consider her the greatest martial arts superstar of all times—including Bruce Lee.

The beautiful swordswoman and, later, the beautiful kung-fu woman, have long been a staple of the Chinese martial arts movies which were made to be seen by a Chinese audience. Until the martial arts movie began to become popular there was nothing to compare to the Chinese swordswoman in Western-produced films. The usual attempts to portray women who were skilled in fighting consisted of taking some very tall actresses, costuming them in next to nothing, and having them easily defeated by the heroes. In contrast, the Chinese swordswoman almost always emerged victorious—unless she was defeated by another woman. Also, the Chinese swordswoman was always dressed modestly; she was never a naked savage. Finally, she also stayed on top of the situation in love as well as in war. She did not hang up her sword and ride off with the first “real man” who showed up.

In other words, the Chinese films treat the fighting woman seriously. The American and European films use her as a gimmick, something a bit far out to give the audience a few kicks. No one is expected to believe that Pussy Galore was going to beat James Bond in *Goldfinger*. She was funny as she talked tough and sexy thereafter. And this is all that was expected of any tough broad in a Western-made film.



Why the difference in the attitude toward fighting women displayed by Western and Chinese film makers? Part of it can be explained historically. In Western culture the fighting woman is believed to be a myth. In Asia, there is ample historically reliable proof that women did fight and win. The recorded histories of China, Japan and Southeast Asia go back quite a few centuries. Unlike the people of the West, Asians do not consider everything more than a few generations old to be mythology.

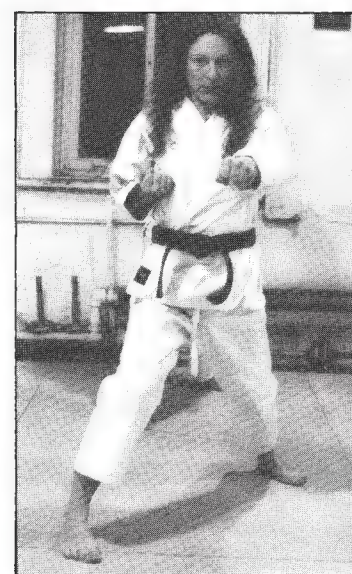
The result is that a movie like *FOURTEEN AMAZONS* comes across as historical fiction rather than low comedy. There was nothing funny about the women of the Yang family leading a victorious army against the mongol invaders of China. It actually happened even though it was centuries ago. The Chinese felt no need to explain the martial skills of the Yang women by making them into caricatures. Chinese women of that period in noble families dressed beautifully and did not speak like uneducated gangsters. Just because the use of weapons and military strategy were part of their achievements doesn't mean that they were suddenly made into low-life clowns. That kind of stereotyping was reserved for the Mongol invaders who were not only barbarians but liars and cowards as well.

The acceptability of fighting women as part of Chinese culture explains the popularity in modern China of revolutionary ballets like “The White Haired Girl” and “The Red Detachment of Women.” Far from being new and disturbing to most of the Chinese people, these are remakes of ancient

FIGHTING

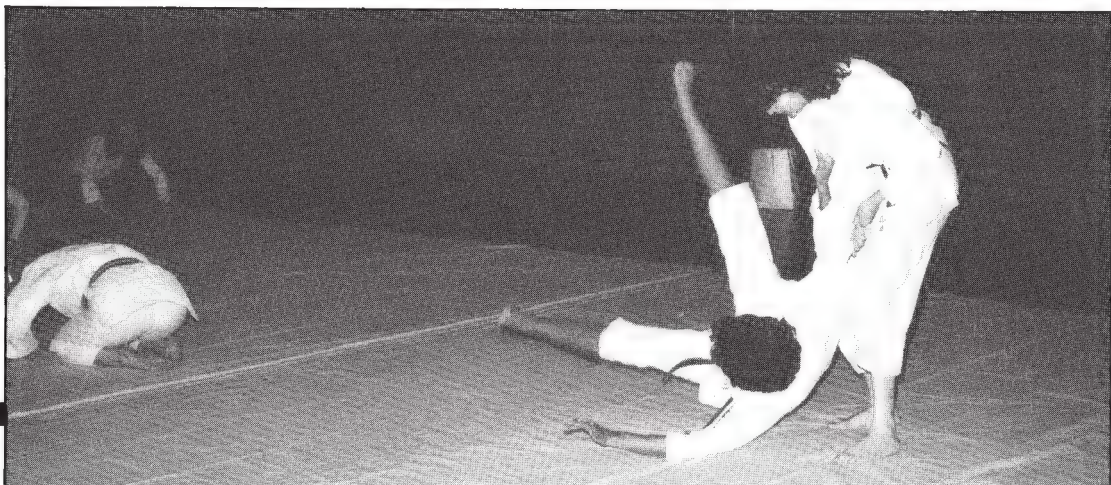
WOMAN

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THE MYTH AND THE REALITY





history.

The films of Angela Mao Ying and other women who specialize in empty-handed fighting are helped along by the accepted fact that the Wing Chun style of kung-fu was founded by a woman. There is no doubt that the Wing Chun system gained its greatest popularity in America as the system which was Bruce Lee's introduction to martial arts. However, this style is frequently referred to in Chinese Films. In *THE MEN OF SHAO LIN* the hero is told by the old master that he must learn "the nun's system" to defeat the villain. The villain, a Manchu this time, practices the Bok Mei system and is as good as its founder, "the white-eyebrow priest." The Manchu can use internal power to make his skin invulnerable to blows. The nun's ripping technique wins in a final gory duel.

The fact that Yim Wing Chun has never been dismissed as being a legend is explained somewhat in an article by sifu John Yee who lived in one of the Shaolin monasteries and studied martial arts there until the time of the revolution. He recalls that as a teenager he made some wise remarks to a girl a few years older who pounded the heck out of him. Sifu Yee also recalls that the common people looked on the nuns as being more of an oddity than the priests even though they couldn't always tell the difference. The nuns wore the same loose robes and shaved their heads as the priests did. There had obviously been some changes in China since the old days when the monasteries were founded.

Something similar happened in Japan. There is ample evidence in Japanese art and literature that women of the warrior class were skilled in weaponry and that some achieved fame as warriors. The story of Itagaki (c.1200 A.D.) who led warriors of the Taira clan against those of the Hojo clan is typical. In one encounter she is credited with having killed more enemy soldiers than any other fighter. The Minamoto clan had Tamoe Gozen who, during one great battle, held the field alone when everyone else was dead or running.

By Western standards, all of this happened so long ago that it could be dismissed as legend. In the case of Japan, however, it was still happening barely one hundred years ago. During the last samurai rebellion the women of the Satsuma clan rode against the Emperor Meiji's cavalry in 1877. The samurai lost, and one result was the virtual end of women's martial arts in Japan. Just as the common people of China lost touch with the part of their culture which had led to the establishment of the great temples and monasteries for both men and women, the common people of Japan could not accept the notion of martial arts training for women.

(Continued on page 64)

FIGHTING WOMAN

(Continued from page 40)

However, neither the Chinese nor the Japanese try to make the tales of women warriors into legends dreamed up by ignorant and superstitious folks long ago. That is what happened in the West to the story of the Amazons. The Amazons first appear in the writings of Herodotus in the fifth century B.C. Although later writers put the Amazons into the Trojan War on the side of Troy, they do not appear in Homer's account. Incidentally, until Heinrich Schliemann actually dug it up, Troy itself was generally regarded to be a myth.

Herodotus also refers to the woman admiral Artemisia of Halicarnassus but she never captured the popular imagination the way the barbaric Amazons did. Sculptors made statues of them; vase painters immortalized them locked in combat with the Greeks; writers borrowed them from Herodotus and put them into numerous settings without much regard for distinguishing fact from fiction. Because of this, every reference to the Amazons has come to be questioned and all references to women fighters are suspected of being legendary.

Thus the tale of Queen Boadicea, who led the Celtic tribes of Britain in revolt against Rome during the first century A.D., goes from one extreme to the other. In some accounts she was merely the titular leader of her people and in others she led the army and fought from her chariot. By the time Western civilization got to roughly the same place in history as the Japan of Itagaki and Tamoe Gozen, a feudal society, the best they could do was Joan of Arc. Although Saint Joan was eventually executed for having worn armor and carried a sword, there is no record that she ever fought or directed a battle. She was a symbolic leader.

The Western fighting woman hit her peak in ancient Greece, and it's been down hill from there on. Women have fought in every war from Troy to Vietnam, but, somehow, the idea has never sat comfortably in the West. War movies frequently include women resistance fighters, but not as fighters. The main job of these women is to provide a "love interest" for the leading man. They also contributed to the suspense by tripping, fainting, panicking or otherwise fouling up on the job just to make things harder for the hero. The general idea is that they try hard but just can't make it.

The alternative to this is the modern Amazon who thinks she's tough but boy-does-she-get-hers from the hero. The British TV series *The Avengers* was one of the few successful attempts to use a female protagonist with fighting skills. It was the careful use of basic martial arts techniques which helped to make the character believable. Which leads to the inevitable question. Off camera, without a script to dictate the outcome, how well do women do in martial arts?

The answer is that they do rather well insofar as they are allowed to try. Women's participation in martial arts or, as some purists insist, martial sports, has not been readily accepted in modern America. Judo was the first of these sports from Asia to become popular. The first woman to study judo in Japan had to do it privately. Even though their families were involved in the sport from the beginning, these women couldn't go to the training hall to practice. It wasn't until after World War II that women were encouraged to practice judo, and then a whole new sport was created for them. "Ladies judo" is still practiced in Japan but has been largely abandoned elsewhere as women have proven themselves able and

more than willing to do "the real thing." With women only recently allowed to compete even against one another, it is not surprising that mixed-sex competition is seen as a way-out idea. Most judo women will admit that men have an advantage in strength that is very difficult to overcome.

In karate, including Korean and home-grown American styles, things seemed to be even more reactionary than in judo. Now they are rapidly changing. What helped was the effort of some determined women to get representation in karate tournaments and some publicity, not all appreciated, drummed up by the media folks into one first class hype.

It must have been strange indeed to see the reaction at some karate schools to the newspaper and TV publicity on Marion Bermudez. Bermudez was a well-known competitor in the Southwest area when she got nationwide publicity for entering the Golden Gloves. What actually happened was that she won her first match and lost the second to the man who went on to win the division. For some reason, the media people latched onto this event and gave it a lot of coverage.



They went so far as to hail Bermudez as a Golden Glove Champion!

The most important thing she did was to set a precedent. After that her karate match against Anthony Suarez was shown on "Wide World of Sports" and millions of Saturday afternoon enthusiasts got their first look at an Amazon. She is all of 125 pounds and very good looking. Public relations march on!

The next sign of progress came from the AAU, an organization usually considered somewhere to the right of reactionary. The AAU Karate Committee is actually two separate-but-equal committees, one for men and one for women. Considering that the original plan was to ignore women completely or limit them to competing in forms only, the two-committee system is a major step forward.

The real shocker is that the AAU Tae Kwon Do committee seems ready to go the karate group one better. Mixed-sex competition will be allowed in forms, weapons and team fighting. Only individual fighting will remain all-male to satisfy some old-guard objections. This is still tentative but the prognosis is good.

Kendo, probably because it is so conservative, never got around to formalizing separate competitions. There is usually some informal "ladies" competition at tournaments, but there are also women on the teams. The rule for setting up a team is to use the best eligible players. A woman played on the American National Team in 1963. Local clubs intersperse their woman players on the teams according to ability.

The naginata is not practiced much in this country, but in Japan it is enjoying a revival. It is still used largely by women and competitions between naginata and kendo players are popular. In this case, the woman is expected to win. It's quite a thrill to watch a skilled naginata user defend herself against a swordsman of equal skill and much greater size and strength. Just for a moment it's possible to imagine that this is what Tamoe looked like as she rode across the battlefield mowing down her enemies. History records that she was very beautiful.

★★★
EXTRA

DAILY GLOBE

THE ACTION NEWSPAPER

20¢

Vol. 55 No. 25

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Fair 55-63 Details p. 37

WHO IS THE WHITE TIGER HERO OR MENACE

STORY ON PG. 3

ROOFTOP BATTLE WITH PROWLER

This is mainly about three cops moonlighting as fighters. Bobby O'Brien of the Ninth Precinct, John O'Donahue of the 30th and Joey Saldano of the 114th showed up in the Sunnyside Gardens ring without their nightstick, creating somewhat of a problem for different degrees.

O'Donahue, for example, was making his pro debut. He is married, the father of

get Gordon the Gien's as next season. He in "March." quite a job cutting his "food of his face and "him on," his back finish. "I figured I'd get through the first explained referee Valan, "and I'd stop the corner but—boom! got hit."

He got the urge to find out what fighters really feel about a month ago after working in the gym with O'Brien and Ray Elson, the light-heavyweight. "If I did this for money," he said, fingering a bloody towel, "I



**EXCLUSIVE
PHOTO
FEATURE**
SEE
CENTER SPREAD

Continued on Page 8

Story: BILL MANTLO Art: KEITH GIFFEN & RICO RIVAL

AG-190

**EXTRA!
EXTRA!
READ ALL
ABOUT
IT!**

**WHITE TIGER --
HERO OR VILLIAN?
EXTRA!!**

**ROBERTSON! SEND
SOMEBODY DOWN WITH
50¢! WITH ANYTHING--**

**-- JUST SO LONG
AS THAT KID SELLING
THE *GLOBE* GETS OUT
FROM UNDER THE
BUGLE'S WINDOWS!**

**AND WHILE YOU'RE
AT IT-- GET MS. BRANT
TO CONTACT PETER
PARKER!**

**THOSE PHOTOS
IN THEIR CENTER-
SPREAD LOOK SUS-
PICIOUSLY LIKE HIS STYLE!**

**I THINK YOU'RE LETTING
YOURSELF GO *OVERBOARD*
ON THIS, JONAH. I'M SURE
PETE WOULD NEVER SELL
OUT TO AN EDITOR LIKE
BUSHKIN.**

**NOT WITH THE WON-
DERFUL SALARY YOU
GIVE HIM HERE AT
THE *BUGLE*!**

**WHEN I WANT WISE-
CRACKS, MR. CITY EDITOR
--I'LL HIRE MEL BROOKS!**

**WE GOT *SCOOPED*,
ROBBIE! CAUGHT WITH
OUR-- AHM-- *DOWN*!**

**IF THERE'S
A NEW SUPER-
MENACE IN
THIS CITY--**

**--THE STORY
SHOULD BREAK
FIRST IN THE
BUGLE!**

**I DUNNO,
JONAH. REPORT
FROM *POLICE*
HQ SAYS THIS
WHITE TIGER
WAS *CLEARED*
OF ANY CRIME.**

**WHAT *RIGHT*
HAVE WE GOT
TO PLAY HIM UP
AS A '*MENACE*'?**

**-- MR.
JAMESON...?**

**DON'T TALK TO
J. JONAH JAMESON
ABOUT *RIGHTS*,
ROBERTSON!**

***RIGHT* IS WHATEVER
SELLS *NEWSPAPERS*!**

**MY
NEWSPAPERS!**

**YES,
MS. BRANT?**

**THERE'S A
MR. BU-- OH!**

***BUSHKIN*'S
THE NAME--
--*PICTURES*
MY GAME!**

**HELLO-
HELLO, JONAH!
HOW'S *TRICKS*?**

***BUSHKIN*!
WHERE'D YOU
GET THOSE
PHOTOGRAPHS
OF THE WHITE
TIGER?**

**IF YOU'VE
STOLEN *PARKER*
FROM ME, I'LL--**

**NOW, NOW
JOLLY J.--NO
SECRETS, EH?**

**BY THE WAY,
HAVE YOU SEEN
OUR FULL-COLOR
INSERT IN TODAY'S
GLOBE?**

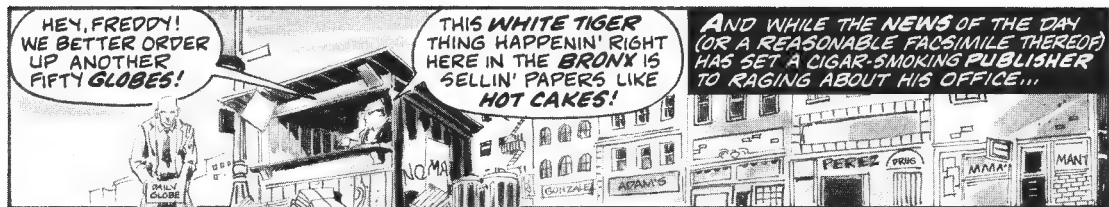
**IS THE
TE TIGER
OR MENACE**

**FULL-COLOR?
THE WHITE TIGER--
THE PROWLER?**

**GET OUT OF
HERE, *BUSHKIN*!
GET OUT!**

**ROBERTSON!
CALL THE *FIRE*
DEPARTMENT--**

**I'VE JUST
SET MY *DESK*
ON FIRE!**



HEY, FREDDY!
WE BETTER ORDER
UP ANOTHER
FIFTY **GLOBES!**

THIS **WHITE TIGER**
THING HAPPENIN' RIGHT
HERE IN THE **BRONX** IS
SELLIN' PAPERS LIKE
HOT CAKES!

AND WHILE THE NEWS OF THE DAY
(OR A REASONABLE FACSIMILE THEREOF)
HAS SET A CIGAR-SMOKING PUBLISHER
TO RAGING ABOUT HIS OFFICE...

... THAT SAME NEWS IMPARTS
EMOTIONS OF A DIFFERENT
SORT TO OTHERS.
**ONE OF THOSE OTHERS
BEING AWILDA AYALA...**



MAMA!
HECTOR'S
INNOCENT!

... SISTER (THOUGH SHE DOESN'T
KNOW IT) TO THE MYSTERIOUS
WHITE TIGER!

THE PAPERS
SAY HE'S BEEN
CLEARED!

BUT-- THEN
WHY DID HE
RUN?

WHAT WAS
HE AFRAID
OF?



AND WHO
IS THIS
WHITE TIGER?

¿DONDE ESTA
HECTOR, AWILDA?

¿¿ PORQUE NO
VIENE A LA CASA??



I DON'T KNOW
WHY HE HASN'T
COME HOME, MAMA!
HE-- HE ACTED LIKE
WHATEVER IT IS
HE'S **SCARED**
OF--

-- IS A LOT
WORSE
THAN JUST
THE
POLICE!

HE'S HIDING
SOMETHING--

-- MAYBE
EVEN FROM
HIMSELF!



PRIMERO
FILLIPO, SU
HERMANO-- Y
AHORA HECTOR!

¿QUE LE
VAMOS A DECIR
A TU PAPA,
AWILDA?



PAPA?
I-- I DON'T
KNOW, MAMA.
I--



MAMA--
HECTOR NEEDS
HELP--OUR
HELP!

I'M SORRY
I **CASHED OUT**
AT HIM--SORRY
I **ACCUSED**
HIM OF BEING
LIKE HIS **JUNKIE**
BROTHER--

--WITHOUT EVEN
TRYING TO LISTEN
TO HIM!



I'M SORRY,
MAMA--

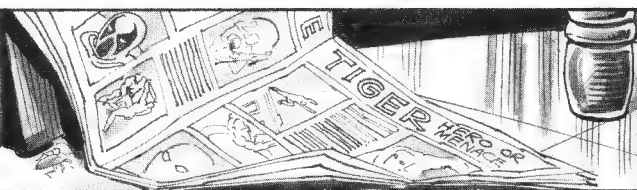
-- AND I'M
GOING TO **FIND**
HECTOR!

I'M GOING
TO **HELP**
HIM--



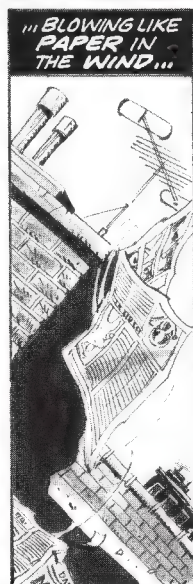
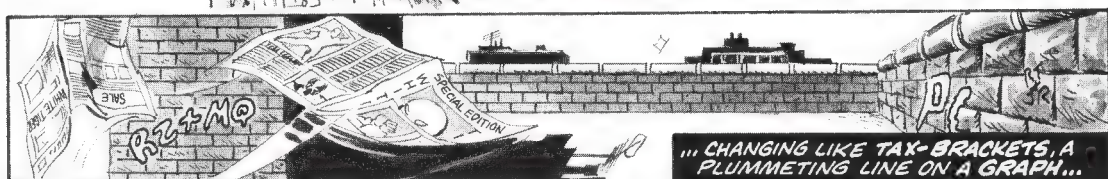
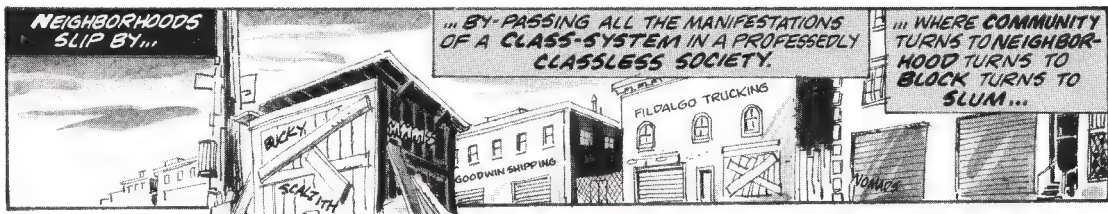
--AND I HOPE
I CAN TELL HIM
HOW MUCH I
LOVE HIM!

THE TWO WOMEN HOLD
EACH OTHER, UNITED
IN THEIR LONGING
FOR ONE OF THEIR
OWN... ONE WHO HAS
SOMEHOW MANAGED
TO BECOME LOST.

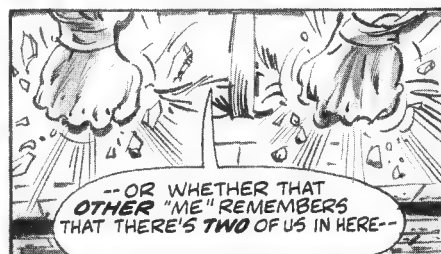
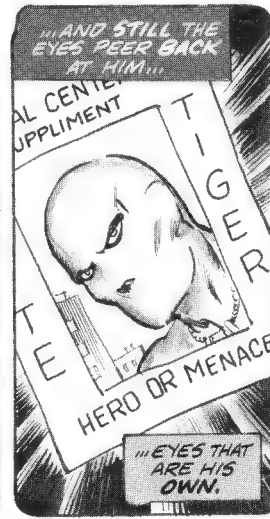
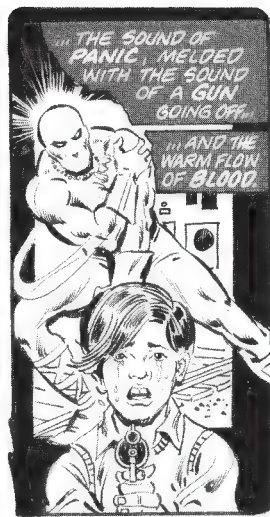
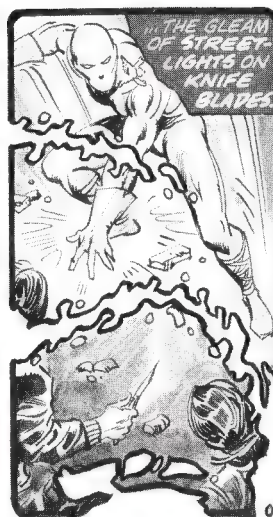


THE **DAILY GLOBE**
SLIPS TO THE
FLOOR...

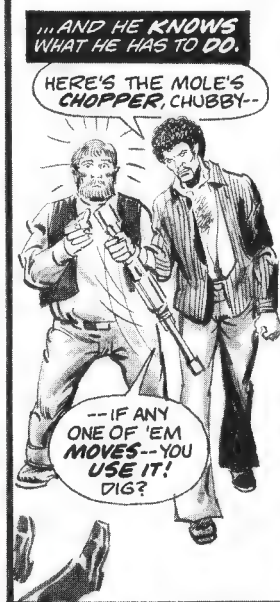
... **UNNOTICED.**

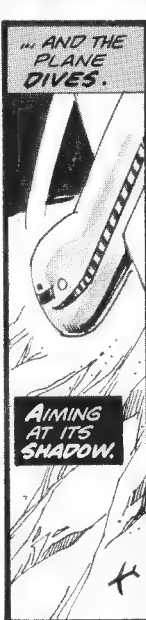
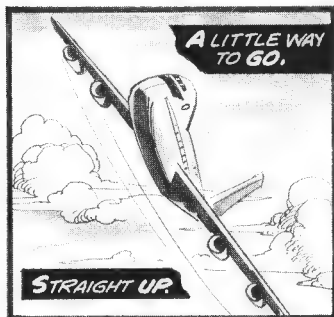


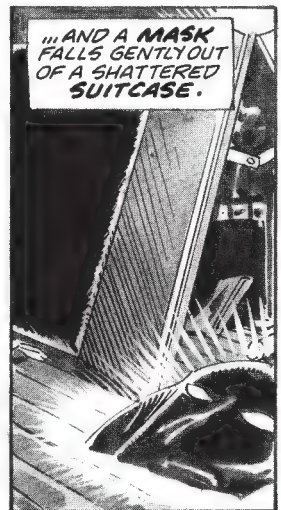
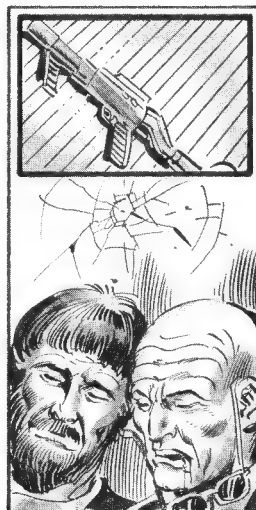
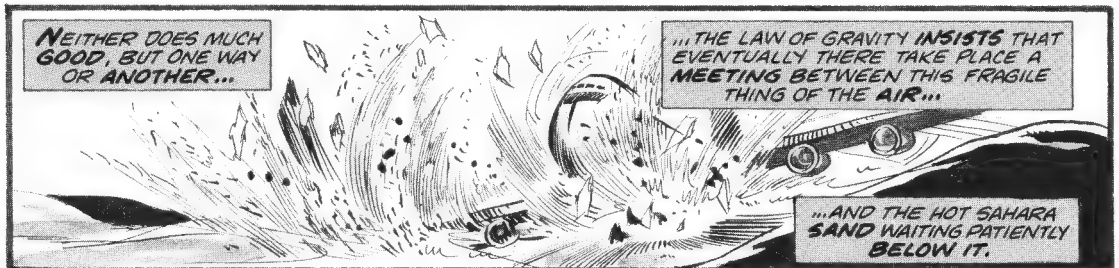
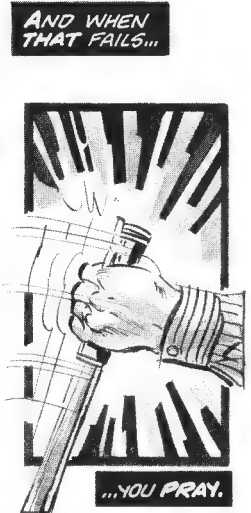
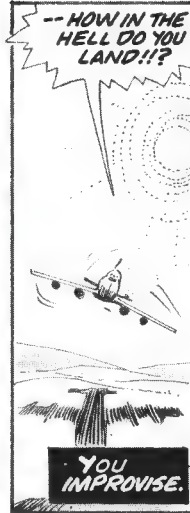












AGAIN... CUT, BACK TO THE CITY.
BACK TO THE NIGHT. BACK TO...

240TH STREET AND LINCOLN
AVENUE. THE SOUTH BRONX.

MEET NESTOR AYALA.
NESTOR'S A HARD-WORKING
MAN WHO'S WORKED FOR FIVE
YEARS TO GET HIS FAMILY TO
NEW YORK FROM PUERTO RICO...

...AND WHO FIGURES ON
WORKING THE REST OF HIS
LIFE TO KEEP THEM HERE.

THREE JOBS WEARS A
MAN OUT... MAKES HIM
IMMUNE TO MOST
THINGS ABOUT HIM.



HE DOESN'T REACT
AS OTHER MEN WOULD
DO UPON READING A
NEWSPAPER AND
LEARNING THAT HIS
SON WAS SUSPECTED
OF MURDER.

AND EVEN THE FACT THAT
HE WAS CLEARED DOESN'T
SEEM TO HELP.



NESTOR AYALA DOESN'T
NEED SURPRISES. DOESN'T
WANT THEM.

UNFORTUNATELY...

NESTOR
AYALA--

...LIKE MOST
THINGS IN HIS
LIFE...

--I WOULD
SPEAK WITH
YOU--

...SURPRISES
ARE SOME-
THING HE
HAS VERY
LITTLE CON-
TROL OVER

--ABOUT
YOUR SON!

CARAMBA!
USTED ES EL
TIGRE
BLANCO!

I HAVE SEEN
YOUR PICTURE
--IN THE
PAPERS!

WHAT CAN MY
SON HAVE TO DO
WITH ONE SUCH
AS YOU?

MORE THAN YOU
MAY WANT TO
KNOW, NESTOR
AYALA!



HECTOR WISHES
YOU TO KNOW THAT
HE IS... WELL!

WHY DOES
HE NOT TELL
ME
HIMSELF?

WHO ARE
YOU TO SPEAK
FOR MY SON?

WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE WITH HIM?

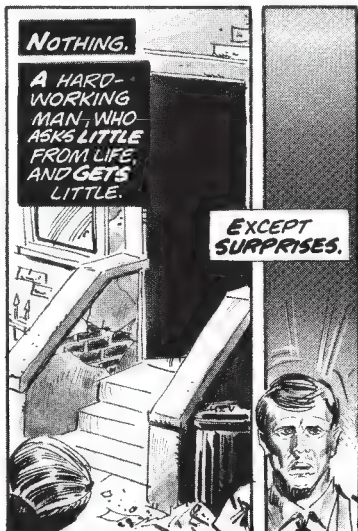


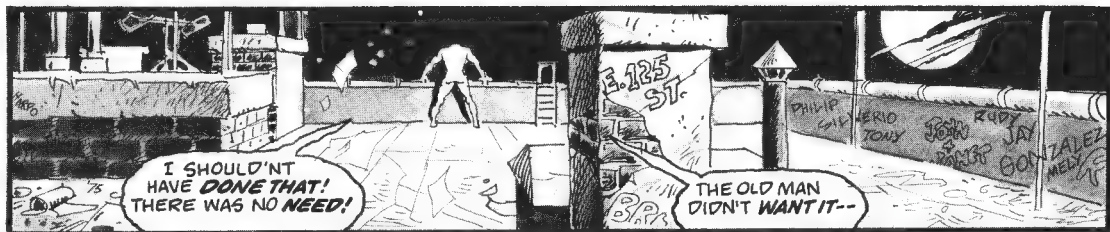
WHO
ARE
YOU--?

NOTHING.

A HARD-
WORKING
MAN, WHO
ASKS LITTLE
FROM LIFE,
AND GETS
LITTLE.

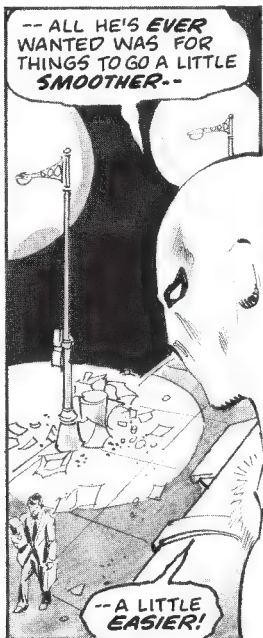
EXCEPT
SURPRISES.





I SHOULD'NT
HAVE **DONE THAT!**
THERE WAS NO **NEED!**

THE OLD MAN
DIDN'T WANT IT--



-- ALL HE'S **EVER**
WANTED WAS FOR
THINGS TO GO A LITTLE
SMOOTHER--

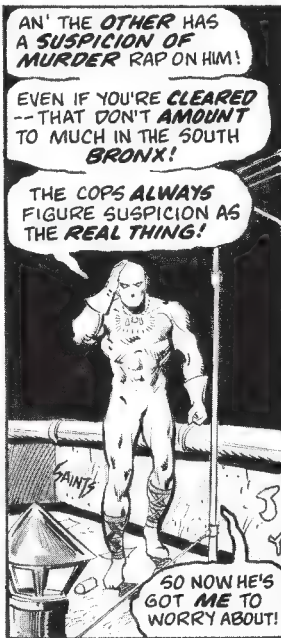
-- A LITTLE
EASIER!



AND WHAT DOES
HE **GET?**

WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF **AWILDA--** NOT
MUCH!

ONE OF HIS KIDS--
MY **ESTUPIDO BROTHER,**
FILIPPO-- IS A **JUNKIE!**

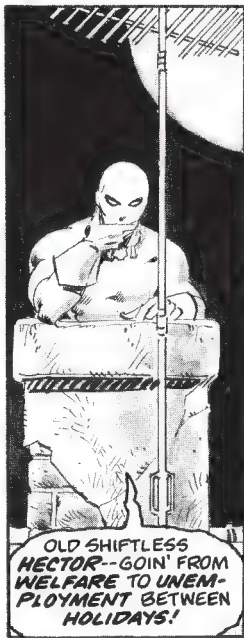


AN' THE **OTHER** HAS
A **SUSPICION OF**
MURDER RAP ON HIM!

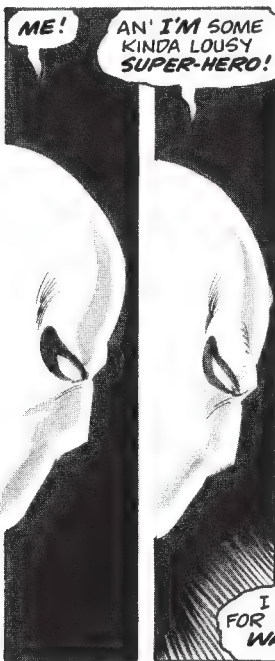
EVEN IF YOU'RE **CLEARED**
-- THAT DON'T **AMOUNT**
TO MUCH IN THE **SOUTH**
BRONX!

THE **COPS ALWAYS**
FIGURE **SUSPICION AS**
THE **REAL THING!**

SO NOW HE'S
GOT **ME** TO
WORRY ABOUT!



OLD **SHIFTLESS**
HECTOR-- GOIN' FROM
WELFARE TO **UNEM-**
PLOYMENT BETWEEN
HOLIDAYS!

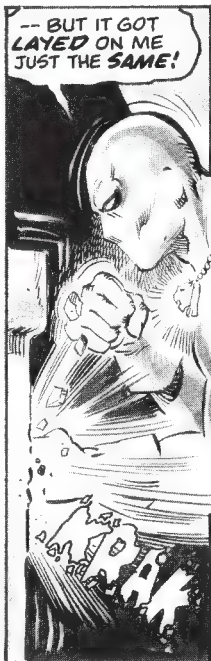


ME!

AN' I'M SOME
KINDA **LOUSY**
SUPER-HERO!



I DIDN'T **ASK**
FOR IT -- DIDN'T
WANT IT!



-- BUT IT GOT
LAYED ON ME
JUST THE SAME!



WELL I AIN'T
BUYIN' IT!

GET **OUTTA**
ME, YA **CRUMMY**
TIGER!

GET **OUT,**
DAMN IT!



GET
OUT!!

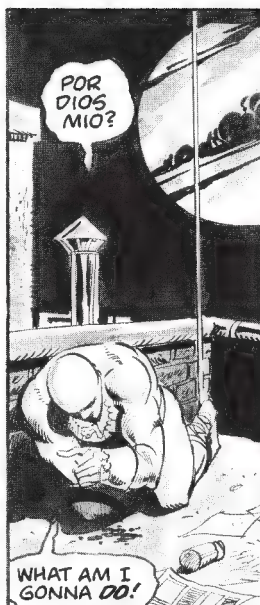


NOTHING...



I SMASHED
UP A WALL
...AND MY
HANDS...

...AN' IT
DIDN'T CHANGE
NOTHING!



POR
DIOS
MIO?

WHAT AM I
GONNA DO!



NOT MUCH,
TIGER!

YOU'VE
HAD YOUR
LITTLE
ROMP--



--BUT THE
GAME'S OVER!

IT'S TIME TO
PAY, FRIEND!

WE REALLY
HATE TO DO
THIS TO YOU,
BUT...



...IT'S TIME ONCE
MORE TO...GUT.

A COFFEE SHOP ON
MANHATTAN'S LOWER
EAST SIDE.

THEY ARE THE SAME
ADVERTISEMENTS AS
YESTERDAY, LIN SUN!



YES, LOTUS. THEY
CALL IT A 'COME-ON'
--TO GET YOU INTO THE
EMPLOYMENT
AGENCY--

--WHERE THEY
INFORM YOU THAT
THE JOB YOU SOUGHT
IS NO LONGER
AVAILABLE--



--BUT
THAT THEY
HAVE OTHER
--MORE
MENIAL JOBS.

OH,
I--



--I GUESS I
THOUGHT THAT
IF SOMETHING
WAS IN PRINT--

--IT MUST
BE THE
TRUTH.

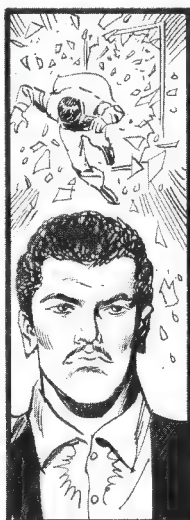


NO, MY
LOVE.

MAYBE
ELSEWHERE--

--BUT
NOT HERE!

FOR THE
LAST TIME...





--PIG!!

THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE, TIGER!

SSHHSKROWN



YOU AND ALL LIKE YOU!

PAIN FLOWING AND RECEDING IN WAVES.



THREATENING TO PULL HIS CONSCIOUSNESS OUT FROM UNDER HIM.

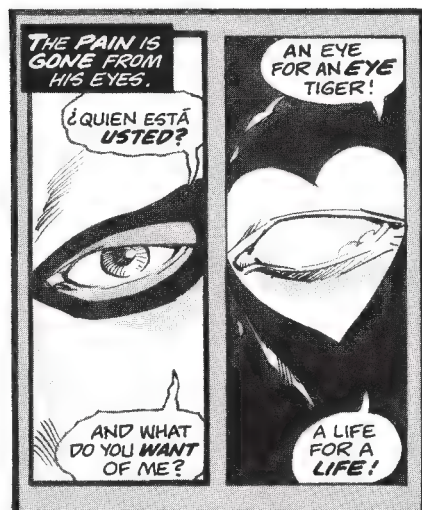
GET UP TIGER--

WASHING HIM AWAY INTO DARKNESS.



I NOT DONE WITH YOU YET.

THE AMULETS AT HIS NECK BEGIN TO GLOW... SOFT WARMTH AGAINST THE SMOKE-STREAKED MOONLIGHT.



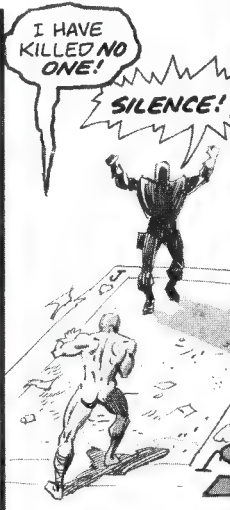
THE PAIN IS GONE FROM HIS EYES.

¿QUIEN ESTÁ USTED?

AND WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?

AN EYE FOR AN EYE TIGER!

A LIFE FOR A LIFE!



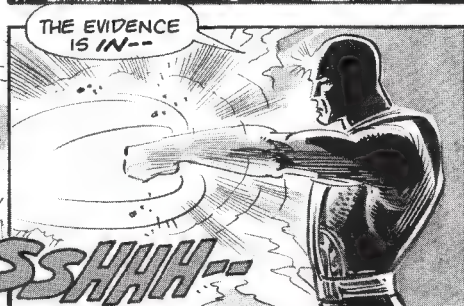
I HAVE KILLED NO ONE!

SILENCE!



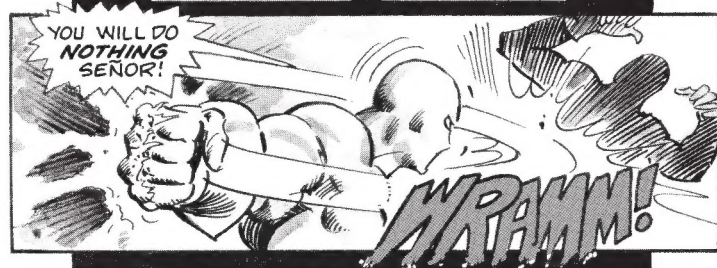
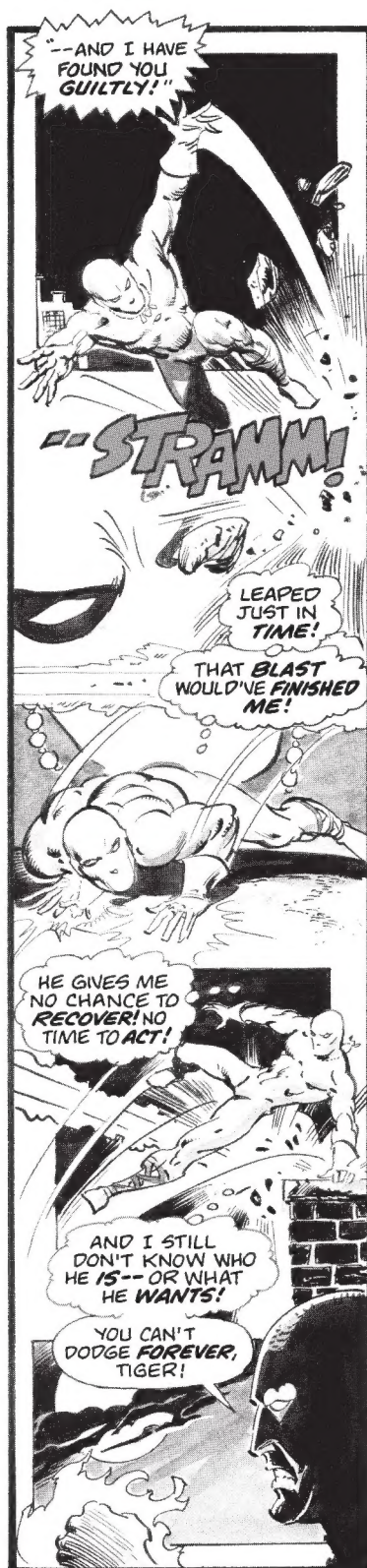
THE TRAIL HAS LED ME HERE! TO YOU!

I AM THE JUDGE AND THE JURY!



THE EVIDENCE IS IN--

SSHHSKROWN





BUT THE AMULETS
ARE *TINGLIN'*--
POUNDIN' IN MY
HEAD LIKE
MAD--

--DROWNING
HECTOR
OUT!

REPLACING
MY THOUGHTS
WITH THE
TIGERS!

BUT WE'RE
THE *SAME*
PERSON!
WE'RE--

--THE *WHITE*
TIGER!

HECTOR HAS
BEEN REMOVED
TO THE *SAFE*
PLACE!

I CAN NOW
BATTLE *FREE*
OF HIM!

IT WAS THE
PROWLER WHO
SAID THAT AS LONG
AS I WEAR THIS *MASK*
I WOULD BE HUNTED,
SEÑOR!

BUT THIS PREY
HAS *CLAWS!*

YOU HAVE CALLED
FOR *BATTLE* AMIGO--

--THE *WHITE*
TIGER GRANTS
YOUR WISH!

FORGET THE
FANCY TALK, TIGER!
I'M NOT
IMPRESSED!

MURDERER!

I'VE BEEN
TRACKING YOUR
FRIENDS EVER
SINCE THEY--

--BUT YOU *KNOW*
WHAT THEY *DID*, DON'T
YOU, KILLER?

OR IS IT
COINCIDENCE
THAT THEIR TRAIL
ENDS WITH YOU??

NOT THAT IT *MATTERS!*
I KNOW THAT YOU'RE
GUILTY-- AND I INTEND
TO *PROVE* IT!

MY WAY--
TRIAL BY FIRE--
--THE WAY OF--

--THE
JACK OF
HEARTS!

NEXT
ISSUE **DEATH DUEL!**

FIN

NEXT ISSUE

MARTIAL ARTS AT THE MOVIES! THE FAD THAT BECAME A GENRE.

Four years ago, a one shot pilot film called KUNG FU crept quietly onto television screens across the nation, followed by a series of the same name.

Three years ago, a film titled FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH, imported from Hong Kong, crept equally quietly onto theater screens across the nation.

In both cases, the commotion they caused was far from quiet and their impact on the media was far reaching, whether the critics wanted to acknowledge it or not.

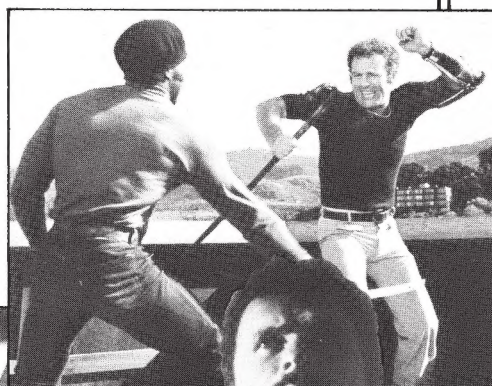
Next issue Marvel's mightiest critics take a look at what has happened to the genre since then, current trends and what the future holds in store. We'll be exploring such films as THE MASTER GUN-FIGHTER, THE DRAGON FLIES and THE KILLER ELITE and discussing such personalities as Jimmy Wang Yu, James Caan, Tom Laughlin, Sam Peckinpah and many others. And our line-up of analysts includes Don McGregor, David Kraft and John Warner.

IRON FIST and THE SONS OF THE TIGER (featuring THE WHITE TIGER) will be here as well—and we're hoping you will too!

That's

THE DEADLY HANDS OF
KUNG FU™

#23/On Sale March 16/\$1.00





Shadowcat

